

Georgia's Exemplary Public High School Librarians and
Information Literacy Skills Instruction

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Cheryl Skinner Youse

M.L.S., Indiana University, 2001
B.A., Indiana University, 1979

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ABSTRACT

This case study was conducted to examine the practices and procedures of public high school library media specialists in the state of Georgia in order to identify teaching and administrative methods they commonly utilize. The study focused on three high school librarians identified as exceptional through either their achievement of National Board Teaching Certification, by honors and awards granted them by the state of Georgia's Department of Education, or by recognition of their excellence as judged by their peers in the Georgia Library Media Association and the Georgia Association of Instructional Technology. School demographics, test scores, web presence, and usage of Georgia Library Learning Online were also scrutinized. Two English teachers working with each school library media specialist were interviewed to obtain further evidence of the librarians' work.

Themes emerging from the data indicated that these exemplary school library media specialists make definite and positive contributions to each of their schools. The themes for this study were identified as Leadership, Information Literacy, Collaboration, School Culture, and Administration. The results further suggested that while there is no specific formula for an exceptional program, there are commonalities of practice for school libraries that reflect the Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (American Association of School Librarians & American Library Association, 2010) and on the criteria delineated by the state of Georgia and communities of practice.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

“The librarian of today, and it will be true still more of the librarians of tomorrow, are not fiery dragons interposed between the people and the books. They are useful public servants, who manage libraries in the interest of the public.” (Osler, 1917, p. 70)

School librarians, or school library media specialists (SLMS), contribute to student learning (Baumbach, 2003; Francis, Lance, & Lietzau, 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003). Baumbach’s (2003) study of high schools concluded students at schools with well-staffed libraries and high circulations performed better on Florida’s required standardized tests. Of 13,050 students in grades three to twelve in the state of Ohio surveyed by Todd (2003), 99.44% believed the school library and librarian played a positive role in learning. A Missouri study (Quantitative Resources, 2003) reported even when considering demographics of schools with high percentages of students eligible for free and reduced lunches, school librarians and school library usage had a positive impact on test scores. Francis et al. (2010) reported students in schools with a certified school librarian and a better funded library scored significantly higher on standardized tests. In a comparative study of test scores in states showing changes in the number of librarians between 2004 and 2009, Lance and Hofschire (2011) determined states that gained school librarians demonstrated a greater rise in reading scores while states that lost

librarians had an overall decline in reading scores. Today, however, is an era of funding shortages in education and, despite numerous studies indicating the positive impact of school libraries staffed with certified personnel, school library programs are being marginalized (Merola, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

According to Everhart (2011), past president of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), the position of librarian is being eliminated entirely in some locations. Certified school librarians and media clerks have been removed from districts in Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, Wisconsin, Kansas, and Pennsylvania, as well as other parts of the country (Everhart, 2011). In Pennsylvania more than half of Philadelphia's public schools were without a library for the 2012-2013 school year, and 56% of the state's schools had no certified librarian (Kachel & Lance, 2013). The Pennsylvania House of Representatives commissioned a study in 2011 conducted by Kachel and Lance and published in 2013 for the purpose of determining the impact of school libraries and librarians upon student achievement. Results of the Pennsylvania School Library Study of 2011 indicated students in schools where full-time, certified personnel staffed school libraries achieved higher scores on reading and writing tests than students in those schools without fully staffed libraries (Kachel & Lance, 2013). Resmovits (2011) asserted the lack of testing specifically for library skills results in higher risk for loss of the position of librarian.

Current education policies have weakened the support for school libraries, especially in the area of funding and personnel (Dow, 2010). In particular, library funding in Georgia has declined as evidenced by recent legislative changes. Georgia's

Quality Basic Education Act , amended by the passage of House Bill 908, waived expenditure controls through the 2012-2013 school year and permitted monies previously allotted for the purchase of library materials and media center costs to be used by administrators for other purposes (Georgia Quality Basic Education Act, 2010). In addition to funding and personnel shortages, librarians faced additional challenges to building effective, integrated programs within the schools they serve because of a lack of understanding of the role of the librarian in the school.

Krueger (2009) reported many administrators and teachers did not fully utilize the school library or librarian and were unaware of the wealth of services and information an effective school librarian provides. An effective school library media specialist contributes to educational achievement through direct student instruction, collaboration with classroom teachers to integrate information literacy into the curriculum, acting as an information specialist and administrator of the library and providing programming to promote reading and information literacy (AASL 2009). Some officials have now offered the opinion librarians are less necessary due to the preponderance of materials available online (Santos, 2011). Kranich (2003) contested that belief, pointing out this overabundance of formats and information makes librarians even more important than in the past. With so much emphasis on assessment, the value of the school library and librarian, seemingly essential components to help students acquire effective information seeking skills and strategies, has been called into question (Resmovits, 2011).

Guidelines for school library programs exist at state and national levels (American Library Association & American Association of School Librarians [ALA & AASL], 2010; Georgia Department of Education [GaDOE], 1998, 2012b; National Board

for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001). These standards represent the best practices within the field of school librarianship at the state and national level. Some school library media specialists have been recognized for excellence in their field through advanced degrees or state recognitions. While standards have been outlined, little has been published about the specific means by which these librarians meet the needs of their students and faculty so well as to be honored for their work. This case study was conducted to identify methods used by these exemplary librarians to carry out their duties. I was interested in discovering how these exemplary practitioners contributed to the school through the development of information and digital literacy as leaders in their community and field as well as how they conducted the practical aspects of management and administration of programs within the current educational climate. In this study, I examined the practices of effective and highly qualified librarians to determine how they function within the academic and professional setting of their individual high schools. Providing insight into the successful practices of these librarians may assist others in becoming more successful practitioners.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Students of the 21st Century have a myriad of choices and possibilities to explore in their searches for information. Internet usage is growing phenomenally. Madden, Lenhart, Duggan, Cortesi, and Gasser (2013) stated that 93% of teens have a computer or access to one in their homes while a large number of teens (78%) use their cell or smart phones for Internet access. Girls ages 14-17 are more likely than boys of the same age to use the cell phone as their primary Internet access tool. Even among lower

socioeconomic teens, cell phones are more likely to be used as the primary Internet access tool.

While North America has the highest per capita Internet penetration, Asia has the highest number of Internet users (Internet World Stats, 2013). Pingdom, a web monitoring company, documented the number of accessible websites. In December 2011 there were approximately 555 million, with 300 million of those sites added in 2011 (Pingdom, 2012). Jensen (2007, B6) defined this as the “era of information abundance” and advised that the web does not serve as a scholarly resource but instead a research tool to be carefully navigated. This wide array of resources brings with it requirements for broader knowledge to locate and evaluate those materials. The availability of more extensive and more numerous resources requires greater involvement on the part of students, teachers, and librarians to become literate in different forms of media (Scholastic, 2008). Schrock (2012) contended that the diverse literacies overlap, making it critical for students to be able to understand and create information in a variety of formats. This conclusion is not just an American viewpoint, as evidenced by Tulodziecki and Grafe’s (2012) study in Germany wherein they examined the questions of how the wide variety of media can be used meaningfully for teaching and learning and what types of educational tasks result from the extensive use of a variety of media. Today’s literacy goal, transliteracy, is defined as learning to explore and use a variety of information in a range of technologies and formats (Thomas, et al., 2007). Wilson, (2011, August 5) questioned transliteracy as a new concept then concluded that transliteracy involved media interactivity, encompassing new formats and technologies. In 2007 both the AASL and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) introduced the

Standards for the 21st Century Learner. The Common Core Standards, introduced in 2010 (Loertscher & Marcoux, 2010), called for research based education and application of higher order thinking skills.

Higher order thinking skills are implicit in the pursuit of transliteracy. Jaeger (2011) puts forth the concept that technological literacy and reading literacy are tied to one another and span the curriculum, involving every subject area. The impact of technology has not only changed the way students search but also the products of research (Cooper & Bray, 2011). Instead of producing traditional written reports, students create multimedia projects. Project-based learning incorporates the use and application of technology for searching and using information to create presentations (Harada, Kirio, & Yamamoto, 2008). Larmer and Mergendoller (2010) proposed an effective project-based learning environment incorporates requisite 21st Century skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and the use of technology. Jaeger (2011) believed the role of librarians to be instrumental in the process of transliteracy, helping teachers and students fuse technology, reading, and critical thinking skills.

Morris (2012) noted the Common Core Standards currently adopted by 45 states include an emphasis on research instruction. These new standards fit precisely with the competencies of school librarians who are well placed to lead in the implementation of research related standards (Morris, 2012). Common Core writing standards seven to nine require students to engage in research and to write about their sources (National Governors' Association & Council of Chief State School Officers, [NGA & CCSSO], 2011). Speaking and listening standards four to six require that students engage in formal

sharing of information through the use of technology (NGA & CCSSO, 2011). Effective school library media specialists teach students to become effective researchers.

According to *Information Power* (1998), the four roles of a school librarian are teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program director. In the role of teacher, school library media specialists provide direct instruction in research skills embedded in specific subject area requirements. School librarians work to promote all types of reading through providing books and access as well as modeling appreciation and enjoyment of reading (Morris, 2012). As teachers, media specialists offer direct instruction concerning literature and technology. In the role of instructional partner, school librarians collaborate with teachers to integrate information literacy concepts into specific subject area curriculum. Working as an information specialist, school library media specialists assist students and faculty in locating and evaluating sources (Krueger, 2009). As administrator, school librarians offer multifaceted programs that participate in public relations activities, collect and maintain resources (Jenkins, 2010a) and provide resources when needed (Yates, 2011).

In 2010, the ALA and AASL revised and reworked the roles defined by *Information Power* to become the ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians, and those standards were approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the same year. There are now five standards in place of the previous four roles identified in *Information Power*. Standard 1, Teaching for Learning, combines and incorporates the roles of teacher and instructional partner, specifying that school librarians be “effective teachers who demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning and who model and promote collaborative planning, instruction in

multiple literacies, and inquiry-based learning (ALA & AASL, 2013, p. 1). Standard 2, Literacy and Reading, calls for school librarians to promote reading for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. Standard 3, Information and Knowledge requires school librarians promote, model, and demonstrate ethical usage of a range of resources and research strategies, corresponding to the role of information specialist defined under the *Information Power* guidelines (1998). Standard 4, Advocacy and Leadership, calls upon school librarians to advocate for dynamic school library programs and to leading professional development activities with the goal of positively impacting student achievement. Standard 4 includes elements of *Information Power's* (1998) roles of information specialist and administration. Standard 5, Program Management and Administration expands on the previous definition to encompass ethical principles as well as those responsibilities defined in *Information Power's* (1998) role of administrator. These newly defined AASL standards reflect the increased emphasis on information literacy or research and reading integral to meeting the Common Core Standards. According to Morris (2012) and Krueger (2009), librarians have the training and purpose to address this academic area.

Colwell (2013) discussed the role of mobile devices and online social technology as a tool to promote both literacy and learning for adolescents. She suggested using texting, Twitter, and other social media as a means to promote discussion about literature. With the pervasive use and availability of cell phones or smart phones (Madden et al., 2014) most teens have ready access to the Internet and could be guided in the appropriate use of this resource in their academic settings. Utilizing the available technology along with other print and digital resources within the library sets the stage for learning across

all media formats, a trademark of transliteracy (Thomas et al, 2007). As collaborative partners with teachers and through implementation of the current AASL standards for Teaching for Learning (ALA & AASL, 2010) and Information and Knowledge (ALA & AASL, 2010, p. 3), librarians serve as an integral connection between students and the development of information and digital literacy. Kuhlthau (2010) stated school media specialists are uniquely placed to enable student learning through the wide array of resources now available. Gogan and Marcus (2013) concurred, stating, “school librarians are perfectly positioned to expand their students’ learning and their world” (p. 45).

The new 2010 AASL standards for school librarians emphasize the integration of 21st Century skills, integration of emerging technology, student learning, use of multiple formats for reading and learning, and the open access to resources in print, digital, and non-print formats. According to Gogan and Marcus (2013) school librarians as a group seemed to be especially suited to assisting with student learning, collaborating with teachers, and implementing current and new technologies. Transliteracy is a concept that covers both technology and teaching or learning with technology. With that premise, I determined to use transliteracy as the conceptual framework for my case study.

Purpose of the Study

While many studies illustrate the importance of school librarians (Baumbach, 2003; Francis, Lance, & Lietzau, 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003) and the GaDOE requires fully staffed libraries (GaDOE, 1998), school library programs in Georgia and elsewhere in the country are losing funding and personnel (ALA, 2012). In addition to the loss of librarians, paraprofessionals are being pulled from media centers (Pilgrim, 2012).

Despite weakening support for librarians and school libraries, there are various mechanisms in Georgia to identify exceptional school librarians who have been acknowledged by their peers or through certification. These media specialists are regarded as accomplished teachers who meet high and rigorous standards (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001). Some school librarians have been recognized by the Georgia Library Media Association (GLMA, 2012b), GaDOE (GaDOE, 2102b), and through National Board Teaching Certification (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001) for development and implementation of exceptional library programs.

The purpose of this study was to discover what methods successful high school librarians use to provide an atmosphere for learning, how they promote information literacy, serve as leaders, and manage their programs. Previous studies in this area have not specified particular methods used by accomplished librarians to meet these goals.

This study provided new insight as to how high school media specialists most effectively provide essential instruction and contribute to the development of 21st Century students who are literate in a variety of media. Results of this study related to teaching methods, practices, and skills used by the participants offered practical examples for other school library media specialists. Armed with these suggestions other media specialists could incorporate the strategies to become more effective as an integral part of the school community and enable them to collaborate more fully as curriculum partners with other teachers.

Research Questions

1. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists contribute to school culture?
2. How do Georgia's exemplary high school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to implement information literacy instruction into the curriculum?
3. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists serve as leaders in their schools through management and administration of library programs?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined.

Collaboration. Collaboration is an interactive process through which educators in different roles such as librarian or classroom teacher work together to deliver instruction to meet educational goals (Rehberg, 2011).

Database. A database is an organized collection of authoritative information, generally in digital format (ABC-CLIO, 2013).

High School. A high school is a publicly supported secondary school usually consisting of grades 9 or 10 through 12 that prepares students for graduation and exit from the public school system (Rehberg, 2011).

Information Literacy. The set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information (ACRL, 2013).

Library Media Specialist. A library media specialist is one who acts in the certified capacity of a library media specialist in a school setting. School library media specialists build and manage resources and a reference collection for the staff and students of the school. They may collaborate with teachers and administration to support

teaching and the school curriculum and offer professional development for staff. For the purposes of this study, the terms “school librarian” and “library media specialist” will be used interchangeably (Rehberg, 2011). The AASL recently changed its terminology to identify those working in school libraries by the name librarians (Jenkins, 2010b) but, in Georgia, school librarians still hold the title school library media specialist. According to former Georgia state coordinator of library services Serritella (J. Serritella, personal communication, April 5, 2012), the title school library media specialist is specified by the state legislature and cannot be changed without legislative act.

Media Center. A media center is a school wide resource (sometimes referred to as the school library) supporting the curriculum containing a media collection, consisting not only of books and other printed materials, but other media such as video materials (VHS and DVD), audio-recordings, equipment, art, and online resources. This collection is managed by a certified librarian who operates the center as a resource for administrators, teachers, and students (Rehberg, 2011).

School Culture. Vathauer (2008) characterizes school culture as a powerful inner reality influencing a school to shape what teachers and students think and how they act.

Teacher. The first role of the library media specialist, as defined in the 1988 and 1998 editions of ALA’s Information Power is that of teacher. A teacher is one who provides instruction, learning strategies, and practice in using the essential skills required (AASL, 2012).

Transliteracy. Transliteracy is the ability to read, write communicate, and interact across a range of platforms (Thomas et al., 2007).

Web 2.0. Web 2.0 refers to the second generation of the World Wide Web which is characterized by high user engagement, intellectual rigor, frequent updating, and collective knowledge and sharing based on a technological infrastructure of applications (Fasher-Herro & Steinkuehler, 2010).

Significance of the Study

In this study, school library media specialists employed in public high schools in the state of Georgia who have been recognized as successful were interviewed and observed in order to identify the practices and procedures contributing to their success. The study primarily addressed the questions of how these librarians manage their programs and serve their students and teachers at a high level of performance. Of special interest were responses relating to the use of print and digital resources, leadership roles, collaboration, and influence on school culture.

This is important in view of the current economic climate resulting in budgetary and personnel cuts to school libraries around the country. Based on various studies emphasizing the importance of school libraries to academic performance (Baumbach, 2003; Francis et al., 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003), it is imperative that school librarians have the information and resources to properly carry out their roles effectively. Additionally, many administrators and teachers are not fully aware of the types of collaboration and educational resources they should expect from their school media specialists (Long, 2007). Some librarians are not utilized to the full capacity of their training (Kruger, 2009; Mardis, 2007). Principals are often not fully aware of the instructional capabilities of the school librarian (Church, 2010) and increased knowledge on the part of principals

may contribute to higher expectations and confidence in their librarians. Awareness on the part of school librarians as to best practices may provide tools for them to carry out their duties more effectively.

Assumptions of the Study

This study is based on the assumptions the criteria for being named Georgia Media Specialist of the Year and the criteria for being a nationally board certified teacher do actually identify effective and proficient practitioners. A basic assumption of this study is that the Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010), when put into practice, produce effective and successful school librarians. This study assumes certified school library media specialists in the state of Georgia have graduated from a school with an accredited school library media program. Because this study is limited to three practicing high school librarians the state of Georgia, it may not be possible to compare these findings with results found for librarians serving students in other grades or in other states.

Another basic assumption of the study accepts that media specialists do promote all forms of literacy, including the newly defined transliteracy. One also assumes, in accordance with previous studies (Baumbach, 2003; Francis et al., 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003) that those media specialists identified as successful truly make a positive impact on achievement at their schools.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study include this researcher's personal lens. As a practicing school librarian, I know that preconceived attitudes and opinions are part of my frame of

reference, regardless of my goal of neutrality. The pool of participants was not large: recruiting media specialists who fit the desired criteria and were willing and able to participate produced a short list of possible subjects.

Another limitation is that the scope of interviews was small: only one interview and observation with each participant was possible. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Observations were lengthier, ranging from the entire school day at Bernton to several hours at Taylorville and Easton. Most, but not all, information was verifiable through shared documents, publicly available Internet resources, or the participants' websites.

This study was limited to practicing high school librarians in the state of Georgia. While the Initial Standards for Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010) are national standards, some criteria examined are specific to Georgia's state standards. This study focused on librarians serving teachers and students in grades 9 through 12. It is possible that approaches other than those taken by these librarians may be a better fit for librarians working in primary schools.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters consisting of an introduction, review of the literature, methodology, case study presentations with data analysis, and the summary and conclusions. Chapter 1 introduces the topic. Chapter 2 focuses on literature related to the historical role of school librarians, the impact of certified school librarians on achievement, and their role in contributing to the integration of technology and new formats into the educational process. The school library as a contributor to school culture was also included. Each of the ALA/AASL standards was addressed individually in the

literature review. Chapter 3 provides a discussion of the methods and processes used to collect data, including descriptions of the design, selection of participants, and factors in collection and analysis of the data. Chapter 4 presents the case study reports of the participants and their schools and data analysis and report of the findings. Chapter 5 consists of a discussion of the conclusions and recommendations for further study.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The field of human information behavior has encompassed numerous concepts including human interaction, context, needs, experience, and availability of resources (Todd, 2003). Information theory has considered the interaction of affective, behavioral, and cognitive domains in the process of seeking information. The study of human information behavior has emphasized the belief that the ability to locate and assess information is essential to the functioning of individuals, groups, and organizations and the improvement of quality of life (Todd, 2003). Dewey (1876, p. 6) wrote, “The time is when a library is a school, and the librarian is in the highest sense a teacher.” Todd (2003) has long believed successful school library media specialists are those who help students to understand information rather than merely locating information. Historically, it has been evident that school librarians have been responsible for working with other educators to support school curriculum. According to *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL & AECT, 1998), the mission of a school library media program was to provide access to materials in a variety of media, provide instruction so students may become competent in the use of those materials and to collaborate with other educators in order to meet individual learning needs. In order to meet the requirements of this mission, guidelines have been established and updated throughout the years. The latest update occurred in 2010 with the publication of *Standards for the*

21st Century Learner (AASL, 2010). In addition to the publication of updated standards for students, school librarians were also given new standards emphasizing teaching, technology, collaboration, use of data, and leadership (ALA & AASL, 2010).

History of Guidelines for School Libraries

In the latter half of the 19th Century, public libraries began placing a few books in public schools (Scott & Plourde, 2007). Acceptance and support for school libraries grew slowly. The first school library guidelines were published by the Committee on Library Organization and Equipment in 1918 (Gann, 1998). Certain (1920) called for both a professionally trained librarian in secondary schools and at least one assistant to the librarian for each 1,000 students in a school as well as a professionally trained librarian to supervise all school librarians in each state. Certain's 1925 revision of these standards confirmed the high school library and librarian are expected to serve the important functions of curriculum, planning, facilities, and access to materials (Latrobe, 2011). These guides were expanded upon repeatedly until 1945 heralded in the first set of national school library standards (AASL & AECT, 1998).

The decade of the 1960s brought the Knapp School Libraries project which promoted development of model school libraries on a national level (Miller, 2003). It was also during this period that efforts were made to combine standards for custodians of both print and the new audiovisual formats including filmstrips, movies, and audio recordings (Gann, 1998). In 1965 the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) allocated funds for acquisition of school library materials (ESEA, 1965). With passage of this act, the federal government recognized the value of school libraries and provided funding (Scott & Plourde, 2007).

In 1975, the Association of Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) and the AASL again convened to address the role of the school librarian in working with more new technologies (Gann, 1998). According to Gann, this joint conference resulted in guidelines and recommendations that designated the librarian's responsibility for providing a range of resources and reaffirmed the role of the library media specialist as a collaborator in instruction. Guidelines and goals generated from this conference were quantitative in nature and specified numbers of materials per pupil, size of collections, and requirements for staffing (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2005).

Information Power (AASL & AECT, 1988) was the next major update of school library recommendations. This edition emphasized the role of a librarian as teacher, particularly in meeting the nine information literacy standards for student learning addressing students' abilities to access and use information (Rooker, 1990). Revised in 1998, *Information Power* (AASL & AECT, 1988) was renamed *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL & AECT, 1998) and shifted the focus of school librarians and library programs from amassing resources to collaborating with teachers in the effort to develop lifelong learning skills for students. The redefinition of guidelines and standards has been a continuous process in order to meet the changing needs of today's learners.

The AASL introduced new Standards for the 21st Century Learner in 2007 in conjunction with the introduction of the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) in 2007. Both the Standards for the 21st Century Learner and the NETS standards called for greater

development of critical thinking, collaboration, and ethics on the part of students. This update of school library standards emphasized higher order thinking skills as evidenced through sharing knowledge in various formats, or transliteracy (AASL, 2007).

In 2010 the ALA and AASL introduced new guiding principles called Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians. This latest revision of requirements for school librarians incorporated the four roles defined in the 1988 publication of *Information Power* and expanded on those definitions to encompass emerging literacies. In the new 2010 document Standard 1 addressed teaching and collaboration. Standard 2 called for promotion of reading and literacy in diverse formats. Standard 3 redefined the role of information specialist. Standard 4 directed school librarians to advocate for and take the lead in creating positive school learning environments and libraries and Standard 5 defined the role of program manager and administrator (ALA & AASL, 2010).

School library programs have been addressed by Title I, Subpart B, Part 4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (United States [U.S.] Department of Education [USDOE], 2002) defining a school library as having advanced technology, up-to-date materials, and a certified professional librarian. The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act provided for the Literacy Through School Libraries program. Literacy Through School Libraries offered grants to districts where twenty percent of the students lived in families with income below the poverty line (USDOE, 2002). This plan called for use of programs and materials grounded in scientifically based research. Assessment of the efficacy of the library program was to be made by determining the extent of resources made available and used most often (USDOE, 2002). The SKILLS, or Strengthening Kids' Interest in Learning and Libraries Act, H.R. 3776 was introduced in the U.S. House

of Representatives in January 2012 and sent to committee (Roberts, 2012). Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island introduced and supported the SKILLS Act and called for inclusion of dedicated funds for use in school libraries staffed by a certified librarian (Whelan, 2012). If passed, this act would have amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to define an effective school library as one staffed full time by a state-certified librarian who has up-to-date technology and materials, collaborates regularly with teachers, and teaches digital literacy skills. The SKILLS Act would have also provided professional development grants and funds for librarians (Roberts, 2012); however, the Senate version of this act was withdrawn in committee due to lack of support. The 112th Congress adjourned without passing the act and it has not been reintroduced (Popvox, 2013).

Information Literacy

Changes in guidelines and standards for student learning have reflected how the definition of information literacy has evolved over time. In 1989, the definition included the ability to know when information was needed as well as having located, evaluated, and used the found information (Loertscher & Woolls, 1997). In 1992, the definition was expanded by Doyle and included use of information from a variety of sources. The term telecommunications literacy was added in 1997 to encompass online resources (Loertscher & Woolls). Woolls (in Loertscher & Woolls, 1997) emphasized the importance of critical thinking skills as a benchmark for being information literate. New standards have called for learners to develop skills required to draw conclusions, use previous knowledge in new situations, create new knowledge and ethically share knowledge with others while pursuing personal growth (AASL, 2007). This terminology

has reflected newly created formats for creation and distribution of knowledge. Jones, interviewed by Steele-Pierce (2011), maintained literacy has evolved to the point where it is no longer defined or confined by format. Transliteracy (Colwell, 2013; Gogan & Marcus, 2013) has supported this evolution of formats available for accessing and using information as well as creative expression and formation of new knowledge.

Today's world has offered an ever expanding wealth of resources to convey information. The online world seems to daily supply new and different applications and containers for sharing facts and opinions. Numerous resources are available—YouTube videos, wikis, blogs, virtual worlds, Wikipedia, general web pages, Voice Threads, Glogs, social networking media, and other online methods of communicating information redefined literacy (Armstrong & Warlick, 2004). Baumbach (2009) referred to these new Web 2.0 tools as a means to integrate 21st Century skills into the curriculum and of furthering collaboration with teachers. Thomas et al. (2007) posited transliteracy is about all types of communication across time and culture. Many new formats have been shown to be interactive, transformable, and collaborative. Other resources currently available are electronic forms of resources formerly only available in print. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, for example, ceased to exist in print format in 2012 (Britannica Editors, 2012) and is now available only electronically. Because of the seemingly infinite amount of information made accessible online, including free sites and material provided at cost through databases, students must possess the skill set necessary to successfully identify and evaluate information found in the online world (Kenny, 2004).

Huitt (2007) communicated concern that while schools are the best venue for education about new technologies, their structure prevented them from handling the

explosive change required to prepare students for the demands of today's rapidly changing world. This exponential growth of online resources has seemingly offered opportunities for easier location and retrieval of information. Ironically, though, this information explosion has not been producing more informed or better educated students and graduates. Breivik (2005) argued today's graduates are less prepared to navigate their 21st Century world of information than students in times past. Thompson (2003) contended college students have become so reliant on the Internet for their research needs that they have little regard for the authority of the information they locate. With rapid technological change, 21st Century learners have needed to be capable of transferring previous learning to understand new developments. Eisenberg (2008) warned technology will continue to change at breath-taking speed. AASL's 21st Century standards have called for students to think and learn on their own (AASL, 2007). Thomas et al. (2007) contended it has become necessary today to possess the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms in order to be considered literate. Huitt (2007) called for a shift in attitudes due to the changes brought about by the availability of digital resources and the necessity for schools to properly prepare students to fully utilize those resources. Colwell (2013) suggested utilizing the students' inherent preference for cell phones, social networking, and texting as a viable resource for instruction. Referring to today's complex information environment, Kuhlthau (2010) argued school media specialists are uniquely placed to facilitate student learning through the maze of vast resources and multiple channels of communication. Subramaniam, Ahn, Fleishmann, and Druin (2012) proposed school library programs can and should become active in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. These researchers contended school librarians

utilize emerging technology sooner and more effectively than classroom teachers, much in the same ways 21st Century students try new technologies and so are well placed to take the lead in this area.

The AASL defined a 21st Century learner as one who possesses competency in the use of digital, visual, textual, and technological sources (AASL, 2007). Allen (2007) expanded upon that definition to include proficiency in technical skills, application and research skills, critical thinking, ethical and responsible use of information, communication and collaboration. School librarians have promoted reading, collaborated with teachers, and supported the curriculum. They also have accepted responsibility for helping students learn to locate, evaluate, and use information ethically in a variety of formats (AASL & AECT, 1998). AASL's *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* (2007) emphasized all these skills and called for equitable access to books, reading, and multiple literacies. While students creating projects have been instructed to cite their sources using standard citation formats, they have rarely been taught to properly cite images, or video and audio information included in projects (Huffman, 2010). School librarians offer assistance to teachers in upholding ethical standards of information access and use and avoiding plagiarism.

The media center has generally been considered to be a school's largest classroom (ALA, 2009). A certified school librarian in this classroom has been responsible for collecting and administering online and print resources and offering instruction in use as well as collaboration with subject area teachers in order to fully prepare students to meet standardized testing expectations. School librarians have also spent time locating varied resources to collaborate with classroom teachers in lesson design. According to Todd

(2008), the school library has presented the best venue for fusing learning, information, and technology. Web 2.0 tools such as voice threads and podcasts have offered dynamic learning activities to more fully engage students (Williams & Chinn, 2009). O'Brien and Voss (2011) argued when formerly print resources have been moved to digital formats, more modalities should have been incorporated to improve comprehension and engender more interest on the part of students. Callison (2007) pushed for today's school library media center to be a technology-based work center where resources of quality and relevance are utilized to engage students and enhance learning with new technology tools. Subramaniam et al. (2012) reiterated that position by advocating school libraries become hybrid learning centers where structured learning exploits various types of resources. Loertscher (2008) defined the 21st Century school library as a learning commons with flexible space where books, digital content, technology resources, and two-way communication exist. The engagement with technology and information literacy has not been limited to students. School librarians are viewed as a catalyst to help teachers integrate technology (Gogan & Marcus, 2013).

School media specialists have assisted teachers in exploration and implementation of new technology tools. Harland (2009) of Plymouth, New Hampshire facilitated the use of blogs for her teachers and students to easily share resources. Harland's students had access to edit wiki pages for collaboration and have done so responsibly. In 2007, some of my own students took advantage of the online world after study of a unit on banned books. Because my school required parents to sign permission slips for class readings of the book *Of Mice and Men*, I worked with English teachers to educate tenth graders about book banning. We incorporated news clips about book challenges with

print materials and information found online. Students then wrote original essays about the first amendment right of freedom of speech, and those were posted online (Youse, 2007). Students with different abilities and learning styles had the opportunity to explore an assortment of resources allowing them to gain meaning and, while the process may have changed, this change reinforced *Information Power's* 1998 declared mission of providing numerous types of resources to meet individual students' learning needs. Utilizing a variety of formats for learning resources addressed the use of multiple literacies, or transliteracy. Transliteracy was the guiding principle for a project conducted by Taylor (2012) as she worked with senior high school students and taught them to use Zotero as a bibliographic tool for the senior research project. According to Taylor (2012), Zotero provided a versatile tool allowing students to maintain records of sources, add notes, and organize their resources for a literature review or annotated bibliography.

In addition to informal sources online, databases have offered more formal materials including printable files, images and videos (University System of Georgia, n.d.). Utilization of this wide range of resources required a broader definition of literacy. The ability to locate, identify, and cite various types of information found in databases has served as an indicator of transliteracy, that is possession of the knowledge to steer through and make use of a variety of types of information resources. The definition of transliteracy proposed by Thomas et al. (2007) encompassed the ability to navigate, understand, and create new media from a wide array of sources in today's world. Today literacy has become a more interactive process. Andretta (2009) believed transliteracy requires active participation on the part of the learner. Individuals have read and written

for educational, business, and personal purposes and in the process created content to share with others, thereby contributing instead of simply consuming information (Weis, 2004). Transliteracy has been called by a variety of names— new or multiple literacy, or visual and digital literacy (Ojala, 2011). Steele-Pierce interviewed Jones, nicknamed “The Daring Librarian,” who contended transliteracy is thinking beyond format and decoding information from a range of sources (2011). Conversely, Wilkinson (2011) challenged the idea of transliteracy, believing the concept was already covered by current standards for library and information literacy. Jones (2011), promoted the belief educators should be preparing students to accept and analyze information; to become transiterate in formats not yet invented. Steele-Pierce concurred with Jones (Strauss, 2011) in promoting non-traditional projects in a variety of formats to enhance creativity and help preclude academic dishonesty.

While state and national standards have broadly addressed the required skills, assessment of transliteracy, or determination of fluency in other media, has proven difficult (Resmovits, 2011). Analysis of transliteracy has involved tools and content used for creation (Thomas et al., 2011). Transliteracy skills have become essential for one to be a successful 21st Century learner (Trimm, 2011). Hamilton (2009) supported a paradigm shift to position new literacies as an integral element for today’s places of learning. Students who have shown themselves literate in multiple forms of media have applied various forms of knowledge to new situations, as specified by the 21st Century AASL standards, and have become better prepared for lifelong learning (Needham, 2010). Hassett and Schieble (2007) argued multiple literacies work together, requiring

readers to negotiate multiple levels of meaning. Students must have learned to access, critically assess and use the different forms of information now available.

Reference and evaluation of resources are components of literacy embedded in the greater knowledge set students have been expected to master (AASL, 2007).

According to Church (2003), these goals of preparing students to be lifelong learners and to achieve well on standardized tests have become linked in the school media center. The National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) recommended students be capable of using digital media responsibly and evaluating online information (ISTE, 2007).

Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning, revised in 1998 by the ALA and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) described a librarian as instructional consultant to both students and teachers and as a library media program administrator. These national guidelines promoted instruction in ethical and practical access to information found in a variety of platforms. This position has been reiterated in the standards put forth by the AASL (2007) which offered a more complex definition of literacy encompassing not only digital, visual, textual and technological literacy and the more social context of learning. As an instructional consultant or instructional partner, school librarians have been strategically placed to assist with or offer instruction in multiple literacies and in the ethical use of information.

Perceptions of the Role of the School Librarian

Though there are many excellent library media programs within Georgia and across the nation, many administrators and other stakeholders have not recognized the instructional value the media program has provided (Hartzell, 2002). According to Dunn (2002), increased time in the library, regardless of how it is spent, produced increased

performance, though many school media centers have been underutilized. Arome (2002) argued school libraries have too long been viewed as detached and supplemental instead of as an integral part of the learning process. Moreillon (2007) again called attention to the lack of knowledge on the part of administrators, teachers, and students about the type of work actually done by school library media specialists. In the United States, school library media specialists have played an increasingly important role in teaching and learning but are generally still regarded as peripheral to meeting standards for student academic achievement (Milbury, 2005). Anderson (2011b) stated when media specialists are cut, instruction in information literacy and research skills suffer because there is no one to provide direct instruction or to collaborate with teachers.

All too often, librarians have been expected to teach skills out of context or monitor students during study or free time, negating their expertise as partners in teaching (Dow, 2010). Training of school administrators has generally neglected information about the positive role an effective school librarian plays and the contributions to school culture made possible by the library and librarian (Alexander, Smith, & Carey, 2003). According to Vathauer (2008), a positive school culture has included collaborative relationships and contributes to increased motivation and achievement on the part of students and teachers. Milbury (2005) asserted media specialist collaboration with classroom teachers increases student achievement though in his opinion that finding has not been recognized by many. Hartzell (2002) appeared to agree with Milbury in stating principals have not generally perceived media specialists to be teachers or view them as instructional leaders.

Perselli and Aman (2006) believed teachers consider librarians to be in a service rather than teaching position and librarians believed teachers lack effective information seeking skills. Allen (2007) indicated teachers do not utilize librarians' expertise in technology because they erroneously assumed students to be proficient. Todd (2008) contended most stakeholders have not seen, acknowledged, or understood the role school libraries and librarians play in student achievement.

School Library Media Specialists in Georgia

Requirements in the state of Georgia for fully certified school librarians included completion of a state approved program in the field, satisfaction of the appropriate content requirements, and a master's degree or higher (GPS Commission, 2009). These requirements have brought the expectation that Georgia's school librarians have been fully cognizant of guidelines and recommendations proffered by national library and technology organizations. Furthermore, Georgia's school librarians have been expected to fully collaborate with teachers in the design of lessons and assessment of information literacy (GaDOE, 2010). The AASL Standard One (ALA & AASL, 2010) has required school librarians to demonstrate knowledge of learners, deliver instruction, and provide assessment as part of the collaborative process.

A variety of means of assessment (grades, portfolios, achievement after high school) would be ideal, but standardized tests have become the most commonly used assessment tools (Farmer & Henri, 2008). While information literacy skills have been embedded in testing of general knowledge, no mandatory course or testing has existed for research skills and information gathering. Students have not routinely been tested for library skills, and that has become a risk factor for loss of the position of librarian

(Resmovits, 2011). Because few testing tools have existed, librarians have relied on informal assessments (Owen, 2010) to determine the extent of student information literacy learning. Dunn (2002) called for qualitative assessment of information literacy skills because they lack concrete variables. However, some steps have been taken to develop a useful evaluation tool related specifically to information literacy or *library skills*.

The Tool for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy (TRAILS) was developed by Kent State University to test the efficacy of library instruction (Kent State University, 2012). Kent State's Schloman and Gedeon (2007) worked to engineer a standards-based class evaluation tool offering both individual and class assessments. School librarians have been able to register for accounts in order to assess their students' skills with the online TRAILS test. The TRAILS has been provided for use anywhere with Internet access and results offered to the librarian; however those results have not become recognized as a formal assessment for standardized testing purposes. Librarians and researchers at Kent State University, in addition to creating the TRAILS test for assessment of information skills, collaborated with high school librarians to produce web-based learning modules emphasizing research skills.

Though skills taught by librarians have not been specifically targeted for testing, those skills have appeared on standardized tests as components in a variety of subject areas. Skills outlined in the Georgia curriculum and performance standards (GaDOE, 2011) have not been directly tied to testing. Competency requirements in locating, evaluating, and using information have become apparent in Georgia's Criterion Referenced Competency reading tests for grades 4-8 (GaDOE, 2007b), in the Georgia

High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) (GaDOE, 2007a) and Georgia's End of Course Tests (EOCT) (GaDOE, 2004). Reference, evaluation and search skills are regularly integrated into daily usage and have become part of standardized test criteria. Georgia EOCT requirements for various subject areas have specified "applying proper techniques for research, and responding appropriately to written and oral communication in a variety of genres and media in a number of subject areas" (GaDOE EOCT, 2011d, p. 5).

Georgia's School Libraries and Funding

The Georgia Library Media Association has lobbied for school library media funding to help insure that school library media specialists can continue to contribute to the educational process in Georgia's schools (Brown, 2012). A review of funding for Georgia school libraries illustrated that while monies have been allocated, the current policies (Georgia Library Media Association (GLMA, 2012c) allowed library funds to be utilized for other purposes as the principal deems necessary. Funds were increased from \$16.28 per student in 1985 to \$19.54 per student in 1999 and remained at that level until 2003 when the amount per student was drastically reduced to just \$9.77 (GLMA, 2012c). In 2007 funding increased to \$13.03 per student and it has continued to be the standard for high school, with the elementary school allotment going to \$15.31 in 2009. However, in 2011 waivers were granted so it became possible for those library funds to be used for other purposes until the end of the 2014-2015 school year (GLMA, 2012c). Despite new funding limitations, a number of Georgia school library media specialists have successfully worked with teachers and students to transmit knowledge and research skills. These successes have been highlighted through recognition of Georgia school librarians and library programs by the State Department of Education (GaDOE, 2012b) and the

GLMA (GLMA, 2012b). Three different types of recognition for excellence have long been in place for school library media specialists in the state of Georgia—the Exemplary Program award chosen by the Department of Education, Georgia Library Media Specialist of the Year award chosen by the GLMA, and National Board Certification. Recognition for Excellence

Each year Georgia’s school library media specialists have been encouraged to apply for recognition either as an individual or for their overall program. For the Exemplary program awarded by the GaDOE recipients were chosen on the basis of peer-reviewed written applications, the principals’ narratives, site visits, and telephone interviews (GaDOE, 2012b). The rubric specified AASL standards for 21st Century learners be incorporated into content instruction, that librarians serve in active teaching roles and plan collaboratively with teachers, that print, non-print, and online resources be available, and that GALILEO (Georgia Library Learning Online) databases be utilized as well as other criteria pertaining to items such as space and scheduling requirements, special needs students, and student achievement and assessment (GaDOE, 2012b). School library media specialists who have applied to have their programs named as exemplary submit applications describing their success in meeting the exemplary standards outlined in the rubric. During the summer, a panel of librarians from around the state has volunteered to read, evaluate, and score each year’s applications.

The Georgia School Library Media Specialist of the Year award is co-sponsored by the Georgia Association for Instructional Technology (GAIT) and the GLMA. School librarians are nominated for this award by administrators, teachers, parents, or other librarians. After district winners are named, resumes, written narratives, and letters of

recommendation were submitted to GLMA for evaluation by a committee consisting of GAIT and GLMA members. Judging criteria have been based on leadership, involvement in professional organizations, promotion of information technology utilization and literacy, promotion of reading and literature, involvement of parents and the community, collaboration, innovation, and ongoing professional development (GLMA, 2012b).

I had the privilege and honor of being named 2011 Media Specialist of the Year for the Southwest District of Georgia. As one of the state finalists, I met and exchanged ideas with other past and present candidates for the state title. Learning about the types of programs they have implemented and lessons and resources utilized made me realize if other librarians followed suit, stakeholders such as teachers, administrators, and students could have a different perspective on the role of the librarian in the school. Imitating these leaders in the field would also have improved library programs throughout the state. Recipients of media specialist of the year and exemplary library media program awards have demonstrated leadership and brought innovation to their schools.

A number of Georgia's school library media specialists have also met the requirements for National Board Certification. The standards for National Board Certification were designed to represent a consensus of best practices and characteristics of expert school media specialists and include the requirements of knowledge of teaching and learning, integration of instruction, innovation, administration, ethical and reflective practices, professional development, and leadership and advocacy (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001). The criteria included in these various measures

for distinction in school libraries have also been identified by the ALA and AASL in the Standards for Initial Preparation of Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010).

School Libraries and School Culture

Vatthauer (2008) characterized school culture as a powerful inner reality influencing a school to shape what teachers and students think and how they act.

While contributing positively to a school's culture has not been explicit in the guidelines for school librarians, cultivation of hospitable areas affords another avenue for promotion of literacy (Cox, 2013). The school library has required a welcoming learning environment with ongoing reassessment and improvement (Woolls, 2004). Standard 4 of the Initial Standards for Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010) has contended that positive learning environments help students focus on learning and achievement.

The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommended the development of positive school culture and climate to promote healthy relationships, to prevent violence, and as a strategy for retention of students until they reach graduation (National School Climate Center, 2014). Campbell (2004) named the school library a cultural institution with the power to create inspirational learning environments and offers suggestions for best practices. For example, she recommended soft seating in place of standard institutional chairs, natural specimens, lamps, and interesting signage to highlight specific parts of the collection. Howard (2010) found that schools with collaboration between classroom teachers and the school librarian, a principal with a collaborative leadership style, and high expectations of student and staff offered positive

school climates and suggested there is a relationship between the school library and school culture.

The Standards

School librarians have been trained to uphold standards established by the ALA and AASL (2010) in order to meet the needs of their administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In Georgia (GaDOE, 2012a), the rubric evaluating school library media specialists included elements of those standards as well as the requirement to include the GPS into units of study. In 2010, the Common Core standards were introduced as a joint venture by the National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). These new standards have been adopted by 45 states, including Georgia, and are aligned with college and work expectations, requiring research and application of higher-order thinking skills, built upon current state standards to prepare U.S. students for competition in a global economy (NGA & CCSSO, 2011). While the new standards have not specifically mentioned school library media specialists, skills specified are those in which librarians have long taken the lead (Loertscher & Marcoux, 2010).

These changes in standards have reflected the changes in society. Rockman (2002) insisted curriculum must be restructured to meet current societal needs. Information and technology has affected everyone in every possible setting and because today's world offers such an assortment of resources it is imperative for libraries to help ensure students and patrons are effective at searching for and using information (Eisenberg, 2008). Eisenberg called for a change in the way information skills are taught, having explained today's students must learn to use technology flexibly and creatively.

AASL Standard 1: Teaching for Learning.

The first standard in the Standards for initial preparation of school librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010) has focused attention on the role of the librarian as a teacher and instructional partner. From the early history of school libraries (Dewey, 1876), teaching was the primary responsibility of librarians along with promoting and ensuring access to information. Early guidelines from ALA and AASL (1988, 1998) provided detailed instructions and goals for the librarian as an instructional partner and teacher and promoted collaboration as a primary goal for ensuring student learning. Georgia's rubric for self-evaluation of media specialists has specifically included the goal of collaboration between the school library media specialist and classroom teachers (GaDOE, 2012a),

Cunningham, Carr and Brasley (2011) recommended increased collaboration between librarians and faculty members to realign their expectations and goals. Roberson, Applin, and Schweinle (2005) maintained collaboration between teachers and librarians produces academically successful students. Promoting an inquiry approach to learning, Kuhlthau (2010) called for collaboration between classroom teachers and librarians to fully integrate literacy skills into the curriculum and empower students to take charge of their learning. GaDOE has stated media specialists will collaborate with classroom teachers to create lessons and teach information literacy skills at all grade levels (GaDOE, n.d.b).

According to Grumble and Williams (2004), high school students in classes where literacy skills instruction were embedded within a collaborative curricular unit were more likely to evaluate information more effectively. Church (2011) emphasized the necessity of preparing new school library media specialists to collaborate, and provide instruction

in multiple literacies while fostering inquiry-based learning, and at the same time integrating 21st Century skills. Todd and Heinstrom (2009) declared a large body of literature exists extolling the benefit of collaboration between media specialists and classroom teachers, though there has been little articulation of effective processes and strategies. Kuhlthau and Maniotes (2010) believed an inventory of the school community to identify experts who collaborate with one another in each area of inquiry would take learning to a higher level, providing students with tools to become lifelong learners. Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell (2005) found academic achievement is positively impacted when librarians and teachers work together to impart instruction. Scholars (Beecher & Sweeny, 2008; Guskey, 2007; Koechlin & Zwaan, 2008) called for greater differentiation and a wide range of teaching styles in order to meet the needs of various types of learners. In the role of instructional partner, school librarians have traditionally offered curriculum support and resources for differentiation of instruction (Krueger, 2009).

Roberson et al. (2005) surveyed 880 teachers, librarians, and principals in Mississippi concerning teacher and librarian collaborations and found teachers less willing to work collaboratively with librarians unless they already held a positive attitude toward librarians. In other words, teachers were not generally amenable to librarians in the role of full instructional partners without prior positive experiences with librarians. Kimmel (2011) analyzed planning sessions between teachers and librarians and found them to appear challenging due to issues of scheduling, complexity, nonlinear procedures, and the tendency of participants to drift off topic. Monteil-Overall and Hernández (2012) declared that for effective teacher and librarian collaboration to exist,

professional development must be put into place to prepare the participants for partnership in a uniform manner. Dounay and Christie (2008) explained the development of communities of practice provided support for all teachers and for differentiated instruction.

Achterman (2006) asserted successful school librarians are first successful teachers and the essential question today asks how librarians work with teachers to take advantage of 21st Century technological innovations. Montiel-Overall (2006) defined five core elements of collaboration: interest, innovation, intensity, integration and implementation with a strong commitment on the part of teachers and librarians. Montiel-Overall and Jones (2011) called attention to the dearth of empirical evidence for collaboration between teachers and school librarians.

Assessment is another area where librarians and teachers have worked together. Assessment of information literacy skills has been challenging, and Allen (2007) concluded that as yet there is no best practice model for preparing high school students for university work. Pandora (2010), piloting TRAILS with ninth grade students, concluded the online test provided measurable data to illustrate the efficacy of information literacy instruction. Owen (2010) advocated using the TRAILS test as a collaborative lesson design plan to identify student strengths and weaknesses in information literacy. Dunn (2002) asserted that qualitative observation may be the most effective way to assess information literacy skills of students, but may be too time consuming to be practical. Siegel (2012) agreed that assessment of multimodal literacies creates a dilemma and thought teachers should work to become more skilled in various modes and methods of communication in order to meet assessment criteria called for by

new national standards. Siegel (2012) expressed her opinion that the new Common Core Standards do not emphasize multimodal or transliteracy skills.

Formative assessment has proven to be an integral part of instruction for the school library media program. Buzzeo (2008) maintained formative assessment is vital to teaching multiple literacies because of the process based nature of literacy skills. She has continued to call for student self-assessment of the research process and for librarians to engage in greater formative assessment. Librarians work most frequently with students during the research process and sometimes do not see the finished project for summative assessment. Using tenets set forth by Wiggins and McTighe (2005), assessment rubrics should have been created after the format for demonstration of student learning has been chosen. Rockman (2002) proposed that an array of assessments such as print and electronic portfolios, performance-based assignments, and quantitative pre and posttests be utilized.

One stumbling block to collaboration between teachers and librarians has been limited co-planning time (Cooper, 2011). Another major obstacle to effective collaboration appeared in the perceptions of teachers. According to Montiel-Overall (2011), teachers have not perceived librarians to share responsibility with them for lesson design, assessment, or actual teaching duties. Despite that perception, Callison and Preddy (2006) stressed school library media specialists considered their teaching as more important than management of library resources. Not every library school has been under the umbrella of university colleges of education and so Achterman (2006) proposed relocation of university library education programs to the department of education, at

least for school librarians, to more firmly ground the school library within the K-12 educational framework in the eyes of all stakeholders.

Cooper and Bray (2011) pointed out many school library media specialists are assigned a fixed schedule of classes, making finding time for collaboration difficult. In the state of Georgia, GaDOE rule IFBD 160-4-4-.01 (GaDOE, 1998) called for all school libraries to adhere to flexible schedules. Snipes (2008), wrote on the GLMA blog, stating the rule for flexible scheduling is being ignored in many places in Georgia. Johnson (2001) promoted the idea that either type of schedule can promote an effective program because a fixed schedule ensures that all students spend time in the library and affords for continuous practice of information literacy skills.

Buzzeo (2008) and Haycock (1999) emphasized the necessity of support by school administrators to encourage collaboration. Buzzeo (2008) detailed benefits to teachers, students, administrators, and to the school library media specialist resulting from collaboration. Benefits to teachers included assurance that appropriate materials are preselected for specific topics, integration of literacy skills into content instruction, new project ideas, new resources and search strategies. Benefits to students included the provision of reliable resources and opportunities to learn relevant information seeking skills as well as lifelong literacy skills. Administrators who encouraged collaboration garnered the benefit of development of instructional partnerships among staff, assurance of effective utilization of skills of the school library media specialist, and development of a richer school culture (Buzzeo, 2008). Buzzeo contended the school library media specialist also profited through development of new teaching teams, the ability to

positively affect students learning through the integration of information skills into content areas, and opportunities to develop a vibrant library culture.

AASL Standard 2: Literacy and Reading.

School library media specialists have promoted literacy (Martin, 2011). Krashen (1993) defined free voluntary reading as the opportunity to read what you want to read and insisted free voluntary reading provides the most effective means to improve comprehension and to increase skill in writing. Krashen (2004) called repeatedly for easier access to books so children may develop the habit of reading for pleasure. School libraries have been one of the major points of access to books for many children and school librarians promote reading through reading aloud to children, modeling reading, and providing opportunities for students to choose appropriate materials (Krashen, 2004). Chance and Lesesne (2012) suggested reading for pleasure has decreased and school library media specialists should be encouraging free voluntary reading. Kelsey (2011) believed school librarians provide encouragement to read through collecting materials appealing to students. Common Core Standards require greater involvement in reading nonfiction materials and Kelsey (2011) encouraged provision of engaging and diverse nonfiction materials by librarians to help reluctant readers and new readers of the English language meet standards.

Makatche and Oberlin (2011) deemed that school librarians promote a culture of reading through the creation of reading committees, *advertising* the benefits of reading, and providing materials students find appealing. Book trailers, visual representations of books, have inspired some reluctant readers to choose specific materials (Gunter & Kenny, 2008). These *commercials* for books have been created by publishers, teachers,

and librarians and by students (Chance & Lesesne, 2012) and can be viewed on a variety of electronic devices, incorporating digital literacies into the reading equation. Book trailers are an example of one way librarians offered opportunities for bridging the digital world with the traditional library world, thus opening the door to transliteracy—the ability of patrons to understand and create content across a range of platforms (Newman, 2011). Colwell (2013) recommended using a variety of digital and print resources to connect students to literature; she went so far as to recommend texting as a way to engage students in a discussion of assigned literature and to use an online resource for discussion and book club activities.

AASL Standard 3: Information and Knowledge.

A 2008 study at California State University identified one major discrepancy in expectations of librarians compared to expectations of faculty members—librarians considered understanding the difference between popular and scholarly information sources most important while the main concern of faculty proved to be comprehension of the correct way to quote and paraphrase information (Cunningham et al., 2011). Scott and Plourde (2007) studied implementation of information literacy lessons and determined lessons linked to activities instead of solely to the development of skills are more effective in providing for long lasting information literacy and assessment of skills may be embedded within those lessons. Allen (2007) studied how information literacy skills are taught in Canada, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific Rim and concluded that the approach to information literacy in those parts of the world more effectively emphasized curricular integration of the skills than methods used in the United States where information literacy skills are more commonly presented as ungraded, stand-alone

lessons. Scott and Plourde (2007), and Allen (2007) all called for more accountability on the part of students and measurable assessment processes.

Geitgey and Tepe (2007) reminded us today's media specialists need to call attention to the impact of the instructional aspect of the library program. Allen (2007) and Gibson (2004) asserted many school administrators and teachers have a narrow view of information literacy. According to Siegel (2012), students bring prior knowledge and skills to the classroom incorporating a variety of audio and visual talents and teachers would be wise to build on the existing foundation to support their students in the creation of new knowledge. Calling today's adolescents screenagers, Scherer (2011) explained students who have embraced new technologies and teachers who have learned to use these technologies convey content more efficiently and effectively. Principals have by tradition been key figures in leading the effort of guiding faculty to integration of new technologies into the curriculum (Strom, Strom, Wing, & Beckert, 2010).

In a marketing research study for online and print newspapers, Cohen (1996) suggested interactivity and staying current with new technology is the key to engaging teens who have grown up immersed in technology. According to teens themselves (What Screenagers Say, 2011), the availability of various devices has made them skilled multitaskers and they want teachers to not only recognize that capacity but share in it and design lessons to take advantage of those abilities. Hagood, Stevens, and Reinking (2002) determined that today's adolescents consider literacy to be active and multimodal, incorporating a variety of diverse media. While students have proven to be skilled multitaskers, Morrison (2007) asserted students are not the research masters they perceive themselves to be. In observations, Morrison concluded there is a gap between

what students claim they know and what they are observed to be doing. Buzzeo (2008) insisted teachers and librarians working together can help narrow that gap.

Serving as an information specialist, school librarians have been identified as natural leaders of professional development and in helping students and teachers master new skills, technologies, and formats (Brown, Dotson & Yontz, 2011). Viner, Lucas, Ricchini, and Ri (2010) described how professional development for teachers resulted in greater collaboration and promoted adaptation of Web 2.0 technologies and tools into the curriculum at their seventh through twelfth grade school. Jenkins (2010) referred to the role of library media specialists as teachers, not only of students, but as instructors of teachers to help them develop instructional strategies for using information literacy in the classroom.

Baumbach (2009) appealed for more professional development on the part of teachers and media specialists to thoroughly utilize Web 2.0 tools. Baumbach asserted a current lack of knowledge exists among media specialists, due in part to the practice of blocking many online sharing tools by school filters. The MacArthur Foundation (2008) called for educational institutions to keep pace with changes in digital media to help students overcome challenges in learning about privacy and social skills. Duvall, Jaaskelainen, and Pasque (2012) concluded that integration of relevant technology into the curriculum results in positive gains in achievement if it is seamlessly integrated into rather than being offered as a detached lesson.

AASL Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership.

Standard 4 required school librarians to focus on student learning through collaboration with other stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, other librarians,

as well as the community. Beaudry (2009), of the Canadian Library Association, called for K-12 teacher-librarians to take the lead in promoting use of multiple literacies, including Web 2.0 tools, to more fully prepare students for college and to become lifelong learners. Professors who have worked with college freshmen have contended they are unprepared for research, relying too heavily on the public Internet instead of accessing print resources and subject specific encyclopedia or databases (Thomas, Crow, & Franklin, 2011). Abram (2011) articulated concern about the reliability and authority of information found in the online world and the ability to evaluate new found information. Undergraduates have not been prepared to conduct research in scholarly sources and databases, instead relying heavily on publicly accessible Internet resources (Quarton, 2003). Fitzgerald (2004) stated college faculty expectations of freshmen include possession of skills in locating, accessing, analyzing, and evaluating information. Having called for more emphasis on information literacy and critical thinking skills for all high school students, Fitzgerald (2004) believed those skills benefit everyone, not just college-bound students. Landreau (2011) proposed research skills should be taught gradually, beginning in early elementary school. Hill (2012) told us while school librarians may not have been included in the development of Common Core Standards; they are well placed to take the lead in implementation because they already know how to teach many of the skills emphasized by the those standards.

Arnone, Reynolds and Marshall (2009) contended 21st Century students must not only value their information literacy skills but use them productively and ethically. Allen's (2007) quantitative study indicated schools teach information literacy skills piecemeal, with no consensus on goals, methods, or responsibilities and so have not

wholly prepared students for later learning situations. School library media specialists have traditionally taught those skills (Thomas et al., 2011).

Johnson (2012) suggested a number of advocacy methods including using statistics, building relationships, focusing on users rather than programs, not depending on others to make a case for the library, and considering that advocacy for library stakeholders is a never ending process. Hansen (2012) stated school librarian certification programs must emphasize that school library media specialists are equal partners in the educational process. Kramer and Diekman (2010) insisted that school librarians gather local evidence in the form of specific actions and strategies contributing to student learning. Assessment data has presented the most dramatic evidence and school librarians should be part of the assessment process (Kramer & Diekman, 2010). Bush (2007) stated school librarians are not effective at sharing success stories with their communities about thriving school library programs and their impact on academic achievement and called for more self-promotion by school librarians.

AASL Standard 5: Management and Administration.

Anderson (2011a) detailed numerous ways school librarians have contributed to academic achievement in their role as program administrator: developing quality collections to meet specific curriculum needs, managing online resources, keeping track of physical inventories of equipment and print materials, and community involvement. These areas have all suffered when school librarians and staffing are reduced or eliminated. Howard (2010) noted that school library programs implementing standards based instruction provided sound support to the academic culture of schools. Howard agreed with Hartzell (2002) in the contention that the support of principals has been a

vital factor for provision of worthwhile school library programs. Harvey (2008), past president of the AASL, indicated that successful library program management includes collection of data and statistics to help guide school improvement. Harvey (2008) suggested developing diverse library collections to serve the range of a school's students is vitally important in contributing to literacy and the promotion of reading. Marcoux (2010) outlined collaboration, rigor, and contributions by media specialist to faculty professional development, and technology integration as key factors for administration of an effective school library program.

Summary

School libraries have evolved over the past 100 years or so from a few books placed in schools by public libraries (Scott & Plourde, 2007) to media centers where a wide range of materials and activities are collected and encouraged (ALA & AASL, 2010). The role of school library media specialists has changed from being a custodian of the books to that of being a custodian and curator of books, digital resources, collaborator in the educational process, and providing a human connection between information and students and teachers (Abarbanel, Davis, Hand & Wittmer, 2013). Legislation in the 1960s favored and promoted school libraries on a national level, providing funding for materials and personnel (Miller, 2003). The NCLB Act of 2001 shifted the focus of schools in the United States to standardized test assessments. Skills that have been taught by school librarians are not a specific testing focus (Resmovits, 2011) and so, regardless of numerous studies strongly indicating the contributions of school library media specialists (Baumbach, 2003; Francis, Lance, & Lietzau, 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd &

Kuhlthau, 2003) to a school's culture and learning process, the position's importance has been downgraded and budgets for school libraries and library personnel are being cut (Everhart, 2011). The state of Georgia has had stringent requirements for staffing of school libraries (FADOE, 2010) and funding, however those requirements are being relaxed (Georgia Quality Basic Education Act, 2010) in order to stretch educational dollars.

Georgia has had a variety of criteria in place to identify successful school library media specialists including the Georgia Library Media Specialist of the Year Award (GLMA, 2012a), the Exemplary School Library Media Program Award (GaDOE, 2012b), and National Board Certification (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2001). Librarians who have been honored or certified through these programs have demonstrated that they contribute positively to a school's culture and educational process.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design incorporating the case study methodology. According to Patton (2002), qualitative research attempts to understand meaning and discover an explanation of a circumstance in context. In this multiple case study, I examined the methods used by exemplary high school media specialists to carry out the roles and duties delineated in the standards for initial preparation of school librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010). Qualitative means were selected as the primary method for investigation because, as Yin (2014) states, how and why questions are best answered through case study. Patton (1985) considers qualitative research a means to understand distinct situations through context. Howard (2010) used the case study process to examine four nationally recognized school library programs and their effect on the culture of the schools studied. While not focusing exclusively on school culture, her results provide an example of naturalistic qualitative research using case studies in the area of recognized school library programs. I chose the case study method as well to portray a more complete picture of the schools and participants involved in this study.

In this study, the practices of three library media specialists and six of their colleagues in subject area classrooms were investigated using the case study to gather rich data about the experiences of each participant. The subject of English Language Arts

was chosen for consistency. I was unsure if I would identify common factors or if each school library media specialist has a unique style. The use of qualitative methods generates explanatory data rich in detail to identify similarities and differences in practices, methods, delivery of instruction, and goals. Investigation of several cases served to gain in depth insight into processes and programs (Cresswell, 2009) of successful school librarians. Before beginning my study, I requested and received permission to conduct research involving human subjects from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at Valdosta State University (Appendix E) on the basis this research was exempt. The first step for data collection for participants to be interviewed was that of contacting school librarians identified as having been recognized for awards, having advanced degrees, or National Board Certification. Written, formal requests (Appendix A) were submitted to possible interview candidates describing the objectives of the research and seeking permission to conduct interviews and observations with the librarians whose qualifications met the criteria outlined for research.

Research Questions

1. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists contribute to school culture?
2. How do Georgia's exemplary high school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to implement information literacy instruction into the curriculum?
3. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists serve as leaders in their schools through management and administration of library programs?

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

I used interviews and on site observations to gather data for the study. For this reason, qualitative methods were chosen in order to generate data rich in detail and embedded in context. Merriam and Associates (2002) promote qualitative methods as a means to understand unique situations and interactions. Seidman (2006) considers interviewing a basic mode of inquiry providing a powerful tool to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experiences of individuals whose lives reflect those matters. Maxwell (2005) calls qualitative research an ongoing process requiring continual assessment. Because I did not know what I would discover during the course of the interviews, the flexibility of qualitative methods supported the goals of this study.

I chose to use the case study approach and interviewed and conducted onsite observations with three different librarians located in high school settings in Georgia. According to Yin (2014, p. 13), “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” Insofar as it attempted to capture the social, educational and historical aspects of the lives of participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), this case study examined the work of three school library media specialists, to determine if replication of practice and procedures was a factor in effective school media programs. Discovery of the participants’ context and understanding of their roles and how they make sense of those roles offers understanding of how the participants are affected by unique circumstances (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell further states that the

case study approach also provides a sense of the individuality of each participant within his or her unique context.

Qualitative research by means of case studies may also uncover unanticipated phenomena or influences as well as an understanding of the processes used by these librarians to promote information literacy and lifelong learning. I identified how these school library media specialists were successful in educating and supporting students and faculty. Through individual interviews and onsite observations of these school librarians I investigated the phenomenon of their success within their natural context. I used multiple sources of information including interviews, observation, and review of documents and websites to provide a comprehensive perspective (Patton, 2002).

Participant Selection

This study examined practices and procedures of Georgia high school media specialists who have been recognized by their peers as exemplary media specialists or those who have achieved National Board Certification in the area of school library media. Possible school library media specialist participants were identified through the GLMA's (2014) list of School Library Media Specialists of the Year, the GaDOE's list of Recipients of the Exemplary Library Media Program award (2012c), and from information gathered through conversations during my attendance at state library conferences. A list of possible participants was then compiled and those school librarians were contacted via email and invited to participate.

After sending a letter of invitation (Appendix A) to the prospective participants, I contacted the school librarians who responded first in order to provide them with the informed consent and to obtain permission to conduct onsite interviews and observations.

I selected the first three librarians who agreed to participate and whose school systems permitted me to conduct site observations. One initial respondent was not permitted to be included as a participant due to school board policy. I then contacted another respondent who agreed to participate. As part of the initial contact, I asked the librarians to provide the names of two English Language Arts teachers who I could contact for interviews as additional participants in the study. The reason for asking for the teacher participants was to gather more complete data and different perspectives on the library program and the librarian's practice within the school. In accordance with Maxwell's (2005) strategy of deliberate selection the teacher participants were chosen because they provided information that could not be obtained from other sources. I asked each librarian to provide the names of two English teachers, preferably one they worked with often and one they worked with less regularly.

Those English teachers were verbally invited by their media specialists to participate. After I was given the contact information for the English teachers, I followed up the librarians' invitation with an email providing more details about the interviews. The teachers identified by the librarians agreed to meet with me. In our meeting, the teachers were given the informed consent document and were told they could stop the interview at any time and that they did not have to answer any questions they found uncomfortable. All the teachers agreed to participate in the study. None of the schools required any other documentation in order to conduct the interviews and onsite observations.

I used purposeful homogeneous sampling in accordance with Merriam and Associates (2002) tenet that homogeneous sampling provides focus and reduces variation

while encouraging rich description from each participant's singular perspective. The primary participants involved in this study were three school librarians in the state of Georgia currently serving public high schools and English teachers working with these media specialists. All award winning or board certified school librarians involved served similar Georgia high school populations though there was mix of urban and rural schools.

Data Collection

Interviews.

Merriam and Associates (2002) maintain interviews, observations, and documents are primary sources of data for a qualitative study. According to Seidman (2006), because the intent of this study was the subjective understanding of the participants, interviewing presented the most appropriate avenue of inquiry. Interviews with librarians and teachers were semi-structured. Interview questions designed to provide information about specific participants appear in Appendices C (librarians) and D (teachers). Open-ended questions in the interview protocol offered opportunities for each participant to define information literacy, the barriers to information literacy they believe exist, and how information literacy is promoted in their educational setting. The interview protocol for media specialists included additional questions pertaining to how each librarian views barriers to information literacy in their specific situation and how the librarian fulfills the five standards of teaching for learning, literacy and reading, information and knowledge, advocacy and leadership, and program management outlined in Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010).

In order to improve face validity and credibility (Patton, 2002), I asked participants for specifics concerning their professional awards or National Board

Certification and for any other comments they considered relevant or important to them. I believe this technique allowed participants to express their respective points of view without predetermination (Patton, 2002). I shared some of my own background with the participants prior to the data collection process in order to help them understand why I have been doing this work and to avoid what Fine (1998) calls *othering*, gathering personal data while giving none myself. I gave the participants the opportunity to ask questions of me as well if they desired.

I recorded all interviews and then transcribed the material. The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder. I used the SuperNote recording application (an iPad application) as a backup recorder for each interview. Following the interviews I listened to the recordings and typed the transcripts in Word. The transcripts were saved as Word documents in a secure file and were printed for coding. I provided an opportunity for participants to review and make any additions or corrections to the transcripts. Only one teacher wished to review the transcripts but she did not make any revisions.

Non-Participant Observation.

The purpose of the onsite observation was to expand knowledge in the area of school media programs through discovery of the processes used by successful school librarians to promote multiple literacies, or transliteracy, and fulfill the roles of school library media specialist. These observations allowed for documentation of the methods and practices successful school library media specialists used to convey the types of knowledge they deem important. I carried out observation as a non-participant observer who is also a school media specialist. Patton (2002) contends there is a continuum of

observation ranging from complete immersion to complete separation. My role was varied during the course of my observations. I was neither a full participant nor was I an onlooker by virtue of my inside knowledge about the workings of school libraries. With the encouragement of Ms. Simmons, one of the school librarians, I did take part in one professional development session at Bernton though I was aware of being an outsider during the training. Cresswell (2009) stated qualitative researchers must take field notes during observations, conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants, collect documents and audio and visual materials including photographs, videos, and any forms of sound. In agreement with Patton about a continuum of observation, Cresswell (2009) noted that a qualitative observer may engage in roles varying from nonparticipant to that of full participant. When I visited Bernton, my observation ranged from full participant in a professional development activity to passive observer.

Observations of the school librarians were conducted in the school libraries or the teachers' classrooms. Teachers interviewed were not subjects of observation. Interviews with teachers were conducted either in the library or in their respective classrooms. I observed school librarians working with students and staff in the course of a typical school day. Observations of the librarians were recorded through audio recordings, photographs, and notes. Notes were taken during the course of the observations. As Cresswell (2009) recommends, I used observation and interview protocols. At the end of each day of observation and interviews, I reviewed my notes and photos and made additional reflective notes and comments about what I had seen and experienced during the day.

Documents.

I requested supplemental documents from each of the media specialists. School librarians were requested to share working materials documenting practices. Materials shared for review consisted of schedules, calendars, web sites, teaching resources, and lesson plans discovered during the course of the interview and observation process. One librarian shared documentation for the application to the Exemplary Media Program. The use of these documents provided a source for triangulation of data. Cresswell (2009) recommends the examination of evidence from a variety of sources to establish themes in order to add to the validity of a study.

As part of the document review, I investigated public records concerning test scores for the school and GALILEO system usage statistics available online. GALILEO is an online research resource available to all schools in Georgia. The GaDOE Library Media Program Self-Evaluation rubric recommends Georgia school library media specialists incorporate instruction in the use of GALILEO (GaDOE, 2012a). Examination of the GALILEO statistics provided information about the use of GALILEO as a research tool within the school system. I believe it also served as an indicator of the efficacy or integration of information literacy instruction as usually the librarian provides instruction for this resource in the schools.

Based on previous research (Baumbach, 2003; Francis, Lance, & Lietzau, 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003), there is a connection between successful library programs and student achievement as measured by standardized test scores. Testing statistics are reflective of other studies that have sought to demonstrate the impact of quality library programs on

student learning through examination of test scores (Todd & Kulthau, 2003). Todd and Kuhlthau (2003) maintain higher standardized test scores are indicative of a successful school library program and so publicly available GHSGT scores and EOCT scores were also considered. For consistency, I focused on teachers in the English Language Arts department and so, as part of the document review, I decided to gather publicly available data about English Language Arts EOCT scores in the schools examined. I thought it would be interesting to see what the test scores revealed about student achievement in the schools where my participants were located. I also looked at scores available online for the GHSGT. I expected examination of these documents to provide additional evidence of the strength of the library programs managed by these recognized librarians. The presence of a certified school librarian and library program is considered to have a positive impact on test scores (Francis et al., 2010).

Reflective Journal

I compiled an ongoing reflective journal as I conducted the interviews and hand written field notes. In this manner, I described my beliefs about the course of conducting research. Because researchers begin interpreting information even during the course of interviews (Seidman, 2006), reflection leads to discovery of what is important and to similarities and differences among the participants. The journal and field notes provided additional data for analysis. Descriptive and reflective field notes were maintained, in accordance with Creswell's (2007) observational protocol guidelines (Appendix E). The descriptive notes detailed factual observations with thick description. Reflective notes described my reactions and initial interpretations of the observations.

Data Analysis

According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), qualitative analysis is an ongoing and continual process conducted concurrently with gathering data, making interpretations, and writing reports. All interviews, observations, documents, journal entries and field notes were transcribed to further analyze them for themes and perspectives. I created Microsoft Office files in Word for transcriptions and other data collected and those files were saved on my personal computer not accessible to anyone else. Following the process of coding described by Patton (2002), the data was reviewed and analyzed for similarities among the responses from the participants and other data sources. I read and annotated the interview transcripts and included evidence from the photos, web documents, and other documentation from the media specialists such as schedules, and field notes from onsite observations. Then I reviewed the items I had marked and began the process of organizing the codes into distinct categories. The coding process used was also similar to Tesch's (1990) eight step process: (a) reading through all the data, (b) choosing documents to discover underlying meaning, (c) listing and arranging all topics, (d) abbreviating the topics as codes to see if new categories emerged, (e) turning the topics into categories and identifying interrelationships, (f) making final decisions on codes, (g) assembling the data for each category and performing preliminary analysis, and (h) recoding existing data if necessary. Further analysis of the codes revealed relationships between the codes and these were combined into categories. The categories were identified as follows: Teacher Support, Information Literacy Instruction, Funding and Staff, Professional Development, Technology Integration, School Culture, Collaboration, Administration and Other Duties, Literacy, Professional Service/Dedication, and Leadership. Themes were developed from the categories based on convergence (Patton,

2002). Themes will be discussed in Chapter 4 with the results.

Limitations of the Study

Insomuch as capable, I hoped to provide new insight into how excellent public high school librarians most effectively provide essential instruction and contribute to the development of transliterate learners. Identification of methods, procedures, and skills valued by administrators and various stakeholders may present other school library media specialists with tools to collaborate more fully as curriculum partners and to promote the worth of school library programs. This study focused only on programs at the high school level. Results may not apply to school library programs at other levels.

Findings from the interview data may be limited due to personal bias, the emotional state of the interviewer or interviewee, and self-serving responses. While I requested to be referred to two teachers, one with whom they worked frequently and one less frequently, I had no control over the actual selection of the teachers. Patton (2002) stated some observations may be affected by the possibility that the presence of the observer may impact the behavior of the participants. A limited sample of activities was observed during the on-site visits. Certified school library media specialists in the state of Georgia must have graduated from a school with an accredited school library media program and one assumption was that their educational background provided them with the requirements to manage effective library programs.

Validation Strategies

In order to gain a broad perspective of the issues, collected data is comprised of material from a variety of sources. Triangulation of information from interviews, observations, test scores, and system level GALILEO usage and library usage statistics provided a more complete picture of what has been occurring (Maxwell, 2005).

Additionally, the application for Georgia Library Media Specialist of the Year was scrutinized to identify criteria considered important to performing the duties of a school library media specialist.

Research through interviewing, a basic mode of inquiry, is key to learning and understanding the experience of others (Seidman, 2006). Case study designs must address construct validity, internal validity, and face validity (Lincoln et al., 1985, Merriam 1988). Because of my own experiences as a librarian, I believe my skills are well suited to exploration of how other school media specialists work. With my knowledge and experience, I believe I am that *flexible instrument* described by Lincoln et al. (1985). For the purpose of this research, the case study approach offers the opportunity to gather comprehensive and systematic information to analyze the programs (Patton, 2002). Thick and rich description of information garnered through interviews and documents presents a basis for generalizability or external validity (Merriam, 2002; Seidman, 2006). According to Yin (2014), a wide range of evidence including documents and observations, in addition to interviews, provides strength to research. In this case, internal validity will refer to the extent and manner in which questions focus on personal experience of the educators. Use of multiple sources of data affords internal validity (Merriam, 2002). Construct validity, relating the interviews to the broad

questions of the study, considers how the interviews addressed the question of the school library media specialists' interpretation of their roles. I attempted to develop face validity, how the research is perceived, through professionalism during the interview process. The reliability of the process can be determined through consistency of the results and data collected (Lincoln et al., 1985).

While making every attempt at objectivity, my personal relationships, experience, and long held beliefs, that is, my own ethnocentrism, may have affected the direction of the interviews in this study. I interviewed three media specialists. Because the teachers interviewed were chosen by the media specialists, it is possible they may present a skewed picture of what is occurring.

Ethical Considerations

General safeguards to participants during the interview included informed consent, a discussion of the interview agenda and time frame, and use of a voice recorder to insure accuracy. As recognized exceptional school media specialists, the librarians involved have already had their teaching practices and procedures thoroughly examined and dissected. Schools, teachers, and media specialists were not explicitly identified in the final analysis and presentation of results. Aliases were created for each school and participant involved. Information concerning participating school library media specialists, teachers, and school location were kept confidential.

The Role and Background of the Researcher

I am a school library media specialist and have worked in public and private schools serving grades pre-K through twelve in four different states. In 2011, I was named Library Media Specialist of the Year for my school system, Colquitt County

Schools, and named Southwest Georgia Media Specialist of the Year for the state of Georgia. I experienced the impact on student engagement and achievement when I ventured with teachers and students into new formats in digital literacy. During the 2004-2005 school year, I worked as media specialist at Hatherly Elementary School in Sterling Heights, Michigan. The student body was then comprised of approximately 500 students, predominantly new immigrants, in grades pre-K to Five. More than 23 different languages were spoken in their homes and while a full time Arabic translator worked with us (many students were from Iraq), we had to depend on the students who spoke other languages to translate for one another. Convincing them to attempt to speak and write in English was a challenge. Author Mark Crilley came to visit our school to talk about his books and draw pictures for the students. They were fascinated by his work and so other elementary school librarians and I decided to set up a blog wherein students from all elementary schools in the system could collaborate in writing their own science fiction story, in English. One third grade class in particular worked very hard on their story to post to the blog. Mr. Crilley became so interested by the process he returned to our school, at no charge, to participate. Student engagement soared and our students made great progress in writing and speaking English (Youse, Kenniburg, & McCormack, 2005). Strom, Strom, Wing, and Beckert (2010) developed an Internet Learning Poll for students and determined they find schoolwork more appealing when presented as collaborative online activities and my experience appears to validate that finding. My team of third graders seemed to be more enthusiastic and made swifter progress using the English language when working together to create stories shared in an online format than when their work was prepared for only the teachers' eyes. In 2007, Thomas and

Pullinger, professors at De Montfort University, collaborated with their students and Penguin Books to create a *wikinovel*, a work of fiction written collaboratively by many, similar to my small experiment in 2005. Ultimately, over 1,500 people contributed and the book was viewed online by more than 80,000 unique visitors (Thomas et al., 2007).

My teaching role is perhaps the role I value the most. Every day I assist students in locating recreational reading materials, using specific software programs, research, source citation, and technology issues. It is rewarding to see students become excited about reading and broaden their horizons. One of the greatest rewards is when a student comes to me and says that they didn't read much before high school but they became a reader because of me. I believe if you learn to read well, you can learn anything else.

I try to find a variety of ways to encourage and promote reading. The past few years, I have been coach of the Book Hawgs, Colquitt County High School's reading team, placing third in 2012's regional Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl. The Colquitt County High School Media Center sponsors an Edible Book Festival each spring, with students and staff creating edible representations of books. The festival entries are judged by community members.

I share information and knowledge, working with teachers to develop lessons and rubrics, embedding research and technological learning into the curriculum. Teachers know they are always welcome to request specific materials and I will do my best to locate and obtain access to those materials. Research requirements at Colquitt County High School have already begun the move toward the Common Core Standards, with specific source type and citation requirements.

I have worked with teachers and students at Colquitt County High School in Moultrie, Georgia to create book trailers using Windows Movie Maker. The projects were multi-faceted, requiring students to locate photos and music, assess the materials to ensure they were appropriate, learn to use new technology, and properly cite their sources. None of the teachers at my school had previously worked on such a project. While it was then new territory, the creation of movies has become a routine project at not only my school, but at the junior high school where some of those teachers are now located. While most students energetically embraced the project from inception, others were initially leery but soon became very proficient. The encouragement for student production of materials in new formats provided students with more possibilities for identifying a learning style befitting their needs while encouraging them to become lifelong learners.

I believe that I advocate for the profession, serving on several system-wide committees, locating information to share with administrators on such topics as the bring your own technology movement, acceptable use policies, and career education. I have provided professional development and faculty lessons on the use of specific databases and software programs and I often share research methods with teachers who are working toward advanced degrees. I also speak at conferences about various subjects including banned books, promotion of school libraries through use of available data, and utilizing databases and Google for successful information seeking.

In my role as program administrator, I read a multitude of reviews and reacquaint myself with standards periodically to spend funds wisely, ordering materials that support the curriculum and promote reading. Also in the role of administrator, I work with the

local public youth librarian to develop programs promoting reading and collaboration between the two libraries. I am fortunate to work in a school system that values its media specialists. Georgia's current budget concessions permit use of library funds for non-library purposes (GLMA, 2012c), but my principal permits the library to spend the nearly all of our allotment of \$13.03 per high school student for library resources.

In Chapter 4 I will review the methodology used and data analysis procedures. Chapter 4 provides a description of the media specialist and teacher participants by school setting. Themes that emerged from the data analysis will be presented. Findings based on the emergent themes and supporting literature will be included in Chapter 5.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the means and methods used by school library media specialists identified for excellence conducted their programs and practices. Of particular interest was discovering how these exemplary media specialists addressed information literacy skills in their programs. In the state of Georgia, an exemplary program rubric has guided (GaDOE, 2012b) how a school library program is to be conducted and some school librarians are recognized for meeting those criteria. The GLMA and the Georgia Association of Instructional Technologists (GAIT) has honored school librarians who excel through awarding district and state level Media Specialist of the Year awards (GLMA, 2012b). Additionally, some school library media specialists have earned advanced degrees and National Board Certification.

Methodology

A qualitative case study design was utilized in this study with a purposive sampling. I chose the qualitative methods of interview and observation for this study to discover detail and context. School library media specialists have occupied a unique situation within schools (Yates, 2014) and so qualitative means were an excellent mode of inquiry to learn about their interactions (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Three primary participants were selected from a list of possible participants who had earned advanced certification as media specialists or were awarded exemplary media awards from the state

of Georgia. In addition to the primary participants, two teachers from each school site represented by the primary participants were selected to provide additional data about the media program and roles of the school media specialists who were the focus of the study.

Interviews and observations were conducted in each school site using an interview guide (Appendix B and Appendix C) and observation protocol (Appendix D). Each session was recorded and transcribed for later analysis. The participants were requested to review the transcripts and to make any suggestions for revisions. All participants accepted the transcripts as completed. The transcribed interviews and observation notes were reviewed and compared for similarities and differences. Library websites for each media specialist were studied. Documents made available and examined included schedules, an exemplary media program application, and promotional brochures and pathfinders available in the three libraries. End of Course Test information published online about each school was also reviewed.

Research Questions

1. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists contribute to school culture?
2. How do Georgia's exemplary high school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to implement information literacy instruction into the curriculum?
3. How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists serve as leaders in their schools through management and administration of library programs?

Data Analysis Procedures

I used Patton's (2002) format for analyzing the data. In addition, Tesch's (1990) eight step analysis process provided the framework for a systematic analysis. The first step was reading through the data comprised of transcripts, observations, documents, and websites to discover categories as they emerged from the coding process. As I read and reread the comments and data from the various sources, I developed a list of codes as follows: positive learning environment, collaboration, leadership, teacher support, professional development, funding and staffing, provision of resources, technology integration, school culture, information literacy instruction, administration, other duties, professional dedication, lack of resources, student literacy, scheduling classes, reduced time, student-centered atmosphere, professional learning communities, alternative funding, presentations, curriculum, GALILEO, and orientation.

Following Tesch's (1990) model, I realized there were relationships between several codes and those codes were combined into final categories. Lack of resources, reduced time, and alternative funding were combined under the category of funding and staff. Professional learning communities and professional presentations were subsumed in the category professional development. Positive learning environment and student-centered focus were related to one another under the heading school culture. The category other duties was added to administration. Under teacher support, I combined the categories of curriculum, provision of resources, and scheduling classes. The category of information literacy instruction encompassed GALILEO and other information literacy activities. The final categories were identified as: Administration and Other Duties, Collaboration, Funding and Staff, Information Literacy Instruction, Leadership, Literacy,

Professional Development, Professional Service/Dedication, School Culture, Teacher Support, and Technology Integration. Table 1 was constructed to show the different categories and the number of related responses of the participants for each category.

Table 1
Categories Based on Coded Responses

Categories	Easton		Taylorville		Bernton	
	MS	T	MS	T	MS	T
Administration and Other Duties	2	2	2	2	4	1
Collaboration	3	1	1	3	8	6
Funding and Staff	14	9	9	14	5	2
Information Literacy Instruction	6	14	7	16	14	9
Leadership	4	1	1	0	1	1
Literacy	2	1	0	1	3	3
Professional Development	14	2	8	3	13	4
Professional Service/Dedication	2	2	2	2	2	0
School Culture	10	6	5	1	11	3
Teacher Support	16	16	8	15	16	14
Technology Integration	6	6	5	10	2	10

Note. MS = Media Specialist; T = Teacher

Introduction of School Sites and Participants

Included in this section I provide information about each case study site with an overview of the school setting, a description of the media center followed by the presentation of the media specialist and the classroom teachers. I have included a table to

give a snapshot of the demographic information for all three case study sites included in the study (Table 2). Table 2 includes a broad overview of each school, detailing the student population, grades served, and school setting. All three schools served grades 9-12. One school was located in a rural setting. Two of the schools were located in small towns. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students was similar though the rural school had a higher number of economically disadvantaged students and a lower number of minority students. Taylorville and Easton were both one of two high schools in their respective school districts. Bernton was the only high school in its school district; however, in contrast to the countywide systems in the areas where Taylorville and Easton are located, Bernton has assigned separate school districts for the city and county school systems.

Table 2

The Schools: Demographics

<i>School</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Setting</i>	<i>% Economically Disadvantaged</i>	<i>% Minorities</i>
Bernton	1,297	9-12	Small Town	45%	50%
Easton	1,731	9-12	Small Town	44%	41%
Taylorville	1,038	9-12	Rural	55%	11%

Taylorville High School

Taylorville High School is set in the hills of north Georgia. Taylorville Junior High School is located next door. The county recreational complex neighbors the school on the other side so that students may use its facilities. Taylorville High School is one of two high schools in the school system. Fifty-five percent of Taylorville's students are

considered economically disadvantaged (U.S. News and World Report, 2014). In this rural school, a majority of students are eligible for free lunch. Minority students comprise 11% of the school's student population (U.S. News and World Report, 2014). Total enrollment is slightly over 1,000 students.

Bernton High School

Like Taylorville High School, Bernton High School is also set in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Bernton is a larger community, having about 25,000 people. Bernton High School is the only high school for the urban area. There is another high school for residents of the surrounding county. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, (2014), Bernton's student body is approximately 1,200 students, with 45% of those classified as being from economically disadvantaged homes and 50% classified as minority students.

Easton High School

Located in several buildings in the downtown neighborhood of a small coastal city, Easton High School is one of two high schools in the local system. The town's population of around 15,000 is roughly the same size as that of the community surrounding Taylorville High School. Total enrollment at approximately 1,700 in grades 9-12 is a bit larger than the other two schools included the study; however the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is similar, with 44% of the students falling into that category (U.S. News & World Report, 2014) and 41% of the student population classified as minority students.

The Media Specialists and Teachers

Table 3 provides details of each of the media specialists who participated in the study, including their school affiliation, their years of experience as a media specialist, and the highest degree they have earned. Recognitions and honors they have been awarded indicating their expertise in the field are also listed. Table 4 identifies the teachers interviewed with their schools and lists their experience and additional degrees.

Table 3

Demographics of Participating School Library Media Specialists

Name	School	Experience	Highest Degree	Recognitions
Curtis Lunch	Taylorville	23 years	Doctorate	National Board Certification, International Technology Innovation Award, Exemplary Media Program, Teacher of the Year
Tara Simmons	Bernton	5 years	Specialist	Exemplary Library Program, Exemplary Graduate Student
Linette Jenkins	Easton	16 years	Doctorate	National Board Certification, Media Specialist of the Year, Exceptional Library Program

All of the teachers who participated held more than basic certifications and were qualified to teach advanced areas within the field of English Language Arts.

Table 4

Demographics of Participating English Teachers

Name	School	Experience	Highest Degree	Other Certifications
Cecile Thomas	Taylorville	22 years	Masters	Adult Education, Secondary Education
Debbie Chamness	Taylorville	8 years	Masters	AP Certification, Gifted Certification
Laura Murray	Bernton	12 years	Masters	AP Certification, Gifted Certification
Sarah Carpenter	Bernton	7 years	Masters	AP Certification, International Baccalaureate
Ann Shipley	Easton	26 years	Specialist	AP Certification
Denise Berry	Easton	12 years	Masters	Gifted Certification

Case Studies

Case Study 1: Curtis Lynch: Media Specialist, Taylorville High School.

The library is centrally located on the second floor, just at the top of a wide staircase. There is only one entrance to the library. The library has a security system

consisting of gates at the door that detect when a book has not been demagnetized. There is a display of this year's Georgia Peach books. A number of books are displayed face out on the shelves and on top of the shelves. As you enter the media center at Taylorville High School you can easily see that Taylorville is very rural—beautiful mountain views from the school located in the northern part of the state. The middle school is located just next door to the high school but the rest of the area around the school is taken up with farms and the county athletic center, whose facilities are used by the high school Physical Education classes as well.

The pace was considerably slower than that at the other schools I visited. The media specialist was dressed informally in jeans and a button down shirt sporting the school logo. The library itself was somewhat smaller than others I have visited. The computer lab was in a glass walled room directly behind the library instead of being incorporated into the main room of the library. The circulation desk was in front of the doors, with an office to the left and a workroom to the right. Straight back was the glass walled computer lab. To the right of that was a small conference room where the media specialist has installed a cappuccino machine for student use. Dr. Lynch told me some students like to eat lunch in the cappuccino room. To the left of the computer lab was another conference room, formerly the media specialist's office. That room was in the process of being converted into a book swap and 'maker space' where students can exchange personal books and work on projects. It appeared to be a very student centered media center. Immediately to the right of the entrance doors, opposite the office, was another room used for storage of the school's two Nook carts, videos, and the laminator. Beyond that room was a larger equipment storage room.

Dr. Lynch served on the Georgia Peach book committee so those books are prominently displayed. Dr. Lynch said when a local book store went out of business he purchased a lot of their displays at a greatly reduced price and he is putting them to good use on top of book shelves and at the circulation desk. He also commented that he would love to have a larger space and one of his teachers, Mrs. Thomas, was adamant in her opinion that the library was too small saying “I wish our library was bigger. I don’t feel like we have enough, and I don’t know that he wants it, but a social space for the kids. I would love to see a place like that.” The shelves were fairly tall—about 5 ½ feet with books on top and the room did seem somewhat cramped. There was little seating for recreational reading—just one small area with a couple of chairs. In comparing Taylorville’s library to other schools, Mrs. Thomas said she would love to see “soft seating, enough for a classroom, small classroom and a large screen television in Taylorville’s library.” Most of the chairs were at tables and it was all packed solidly into the space available.

The media specialist’s current office, a former storage room, appeared small in comparison to his previous office. The office was full of books, computer equipment and other gear for the job on every surface. Diplomas, certificates, and awards were hanging on the walls. Dr. Lynch explained that when there were two media specialists, they shared a larger room with windows on two walls at the back of the media center but because he is the only media specialist now, he decided to convert the larger office space to an area for student use. At the time of my visit, he was in the process of adding bookshelves there to make it both a book swap room for students and a ‘maker space’ for

students to work on projects. An added benefit of relocating near the entryway was to better monitor and be available for students as they come and go.

While I was in the library I noted that a number of students seemed very happy to be in the library and spent their lunchtime there. Students were everywhere—the atmosphere was much more informal than in the other schools I visited. Some students brought in lunch to eat there and were working on computers, discussing books, having coffee in the back room, playing chess and card games and ‘hanging out’ over the lunch hour. Reflecting on what I saw, I considered the reaction my co-media specialist would have if we allowed students to bring in their lunch trays. My own objection to students eating in my library is that it tends to attract insect and rodent life at my school. I have recently needed to curtail the practice of bringing any food into the media center.

Dr. Lynch, the only male interviewed for this study, initially earned a degree in journalism. As the result of a part time job as an undergraduate student working with special needs students, he decided instead to become a teacher with special education certification. Inspired by his grandmother’s career as a school librarian, Dr. Lynch went on to become certified as a media specialist and earned a doctorate in curriculum and instruction as well as becoming nationally board certified. He believed his experience in other special education and journalism contributed to his skills as a media specialist because “just being able to work with a wide variety of students has really helped.” He also holds a license for administration and leadership. In the past, Dr. Lynch has served as president of one of Georgia’s state media organizations and is currently involved in advocating for development of a community of practice so librarians in his part of the state can share ideas and support one another. Dr. Lynch communicates regularly with

other librarians around the state and country and attends local, state, national, and international conferences to exchange ideas. Dr. Lynch says “the Georgia COMO is one that I like to get to” and “one of the ones I really like to go to but I haven’t been able to lately because of expenses is the one put on by School Library Journal.”

He presents regularly at conferences himself, including an International Technology Conference, contributes frequently to library blogs, has published articles in professional journals, and follows the work of several nationally known advocates for school libraries, meeting them when possible. One perk of attending conferences is the opportunity to meet and talk with other librarians. Dr. Lynch says, “it’s great to be able to interact with them and get to them.” He has enjoyed meeting and exchanging ideas with well-known school librarians Joyce Valenza, Ross Todd, and Doug Johnson. Dr. Lynch has for several years been a member of the state committee choosing books for the Georgia Peach award. Evidence of one way budget cuts have affected him personally is through his efforts to obtain professional development relevant to the media center. He tries to keep abreast of new technology but has to go to conferences on personal time and pay for them himself.

In addition to serving as Webmaster for the school, Dr. Lynch was responsible for the student information system, online courseware programming, and for all credit recovery classes at the high school. He has also been charged with responsibility for setting up online testing such as EOCT testing. During the past school year Taylorville implemented a new student “information system, a new online courseware program, and the new website program so it’s just been overload. And, of course my fingers are in all of those trying to help the teachers get going.” He received a stipend for his credit

recovery work. Dr. Lynch also worked with the student newspaper and yearbook staff to record pictures and videos of school events. The school is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) school so students with personal wireless devices are able to use them in the classroom. To supply more technology, Dr. Lynch applied for and received grants so his library is equipped with several carts of Nooks and Kindles for student use.

Dr. Lynch provided an excellent example of transliteracy (Gogan & Marcus, 2013) in action with the BYOD setting as well as his efforts to provide technology for students to use. In addition he created a makerspace for students to work on projects. One teacher interviewed at his school indicated that he “goes through all the online resources for them to do research.” The other teacher stated that he “works with us a lot with the databases and working with the books we need for research.”

Dr. Lynch indicated he was disheartened by the cuts to funding now occurring in school libraries. He believed time management is his biggest challenge. “Time management...because you know when you’re responsible for so many things, information literacy has become just a small little sliver of what I try to get done here during the day.” His situation has changed from that of working with one other full time media specialist and a full time paraprofessional to working on his own, with no other personnel in the library. He runs his media center with the help of students and was told that for the 2014-2015 school year his position would be changed to half time for the high school, with the rest of his day to be spent in the junior high school next door. Still, he says it is the best job in the school “but I used to love what I did but now it’s just a like. It’s come to that with all the cuts. I still like it a great deal.”

He told me he had not conducted a ‘good weed’ for a number of years and wished he had time to remove outdated materials. I did note the library had a large number of VHS tapes dating the collection. Dr. Lynch had referred earlier to the lack of time available to conduct weeding activities. In my own library, we have weeded the VHS collection and are in the process of discarding them all to be replaced with current electronic/digital resources. I can see how having a second media specialist in a large school like this (and my own) is critical to effective administration of a library.

Cecile Thomas: Teacher, Taylorville High School.

Mrs. Thomas has been teaching English for 22 years, most of them at high school but also at a religious seminary and a technical college. She has been a businessperson, a preschool/kindergarten paraprofessional, and a substitute teacher. She believed “having encountered people of all backgrounds and all ages helped [me] understand not only the kids in my classrooms but also some of their parents’ concerns, their families, just the social aspect of the community.” Mrs. Thomas holds a Bachelor’s degree in Education and a Master’s degree in Secondary Education. Mrs. Thomas teaches Honors and Advanced Placement English to grades 9 through 12 and is the yearbook advisor. She said she was happy to have a bank of computers in her classroom but gets frustrated because the “infrastructure that runs the technology” creates a barrier for accomplishment, stating “some days we can’t even get to the Internet.” Another frustration for Mrs. Thomas was the filters blocking numerous websites, mentioning that while teachers can access YouTube, it is blocked for students.” Mrs. Thomas finds her media specialist (Dr. Lynch) “very agreeable to whatever we need,” emailing him requests for materials and “he will find materials for me.”

Debbie Chamness: Teacher, Taylorville High School.

Miss Chamness holds both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English as well as Advanced Placement and Gifted certification. Her current teaching assignments are British and World Literature for grades 10 and 12. Miss Chamness has been teaching for 8 years and was inspired to become an English teacher because she enjoyed her own ninth grade English class so much. She works with Dr. Lynch frequently on research lessons focusing on using GALILEO and other available databases but was otherwise "not really sure what he can offer." She seemed a willing collaborative partner with Dr. Lynch but did not appear to pursue collaboration beyond her current curriculum structure. Miss Chamness was pleased that Dr. Lynch "made sure to get a lot of anthologies for us," and to provide online sources and also with movies and stuff like that he helps us with."

Categories for Taylorville High School.

Using the information in Table 1, I identified five categories that appeared to be the most important or highly visible categories within the context of the library and classroom interaction at Taylorville. Teachers and the media specialist all commented on funding and staff issues related to budget cuts, loss of staff, and loss of funding for technology and infrastructure improvements. Dr. Lynch remarked several times about the effect of the loss of a media paraprofessional and second librarian. One such comment reflected his regret at not having more time when he remembered a program he had in place at a previous school, "we had a great program where we had every grade had something that they would come in and do. Sadly, I've no time now." Teacher comments reflected the loss of learning time and use of technology due to the inconsistent access to the Internet, "it's a little bit easier now that you can just go into the

Internet when the Internet's work but that's our problem. It's the infrastructure for the technology."

Information Literacy was the second theme from the data that appeared to have more emphasis from the teachers than Dr. Lynch. Teacher comments indicated his helpfulness and willingness to assist with research classes and materials. Comments such as "there are a lot of things he has available. EasyBib, things like that;" "he had pulled some specific books and had them on a cart for us;" "he first showed them the reference section where things were," indicated the assistance he provided on a regular basis but his own expectations of providing the service led him to make this statement, "information literacy has become just a small little sliver of what I try to get done here during the day."

Contributions to Professional Development also appeared to be a key theme for Taylorville High School. Dr. Lynch has presented at several state and international organization conferences and his Tech Tuesdays were mentioned favorably by one of the teachers, "We're given Tech Tuesdays. Which is actually on we have today that we can work on our website. And he's always there if we have questions." Dr. Lynch also provided one on one assistance as one teacher indicated, "get emails all the time about things that go with what we're teaching."

Teacher Support and Technology Integration were the other categories that were strongly supported by comments from the teachers and Dr. Lynch. Again, the teachers seemed to have more emphasis or recognition of the media specialist's efforts identified by the categories. Teacher Support included providing resources, class scheduling, and curriculum. One teacher said, "I can email him any request and he will find materials for me." Another comment was, "I know that we do a lot of Renaissance and Medieval and

he made sure to get a lot of anthologies for us.” For scheduling classes this comment was offered, “any time I want to send a group up there I just email him ahead of time. I can send small groups on their own.” The following teacher comments, “he has looked for books online for us, for the department,” and “he will order a video or an accompanying set of books if there’s money of course available” addressed curriculum issues.

Technology Integration was supported by the following comments by Dr. Lynch and the two teachers interviewed. Onsite observations also supported the presence and use of technology. While in the library I noted two Nook carts and was told that a wireless network had been installed. One teacher noted, “the Nooks he got for my AP American Lit.” Also the same teacher remarked, “I love the fact that we’ve got a computer lab, a 28 or 30 computer lab in there and the fact that he’s got computers in the regular area.”

School Culture as a theme included student-centered focus and the provision of a positive learning environment and was evidenced by the media specialist’s determination to provide current resources for both teachers and students. His student-centered focus was represented by comments by the teachers, “we sometimes have a lack of technology because of the number of students we have but we work out a system so that we can go up there [to the library],” and “when I teach ninth grade he always does like a whole introduction to databases and the reference center in the library.” In Dr. Lynch’s words he indicated his desire to make better spaces in the library for the students,

I showed you the room back there where I want to do the small group workrooms. It’s used a lot now. And I haven’t even got it completely set up so I’d really like to move towards that and expand it so that it’s

more of a learning commons. I mean we've got kids in here all day long. My own observations support these comments, as there were students in and out of the library during the time I was there and they all seemed very comfortable using the space.

The other categories though represented by the data did not have as much emphasis as the ones discussed above. Administration, Collaboration, Leadership, Literacy, and Professional Service/Dedication were evident in remarks given in the case study presentation but did not have the strength of the ones discussed above. In most cases, the media specialist remarks were more reflective of these categories than the teachers' comments. This may be an indication that while these are important areas, these categories are more apparent from the media specialist's viewpoint than the teachers' perspective.

Case Study 2: Tara Simmons, Media Specialist, Bernton High School.

Set inside the city limits of a small municipality in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Bernton High School is located behind a bustling shopping center. The building rambles across a large area on several levels and has more stringent security for visiting than the other schools I visited. I had to hand over my driver's license to be copied in order to receive a visitor's pass. During the course of my observation, I spent time in Social Studies and English classrooms, the cafeteria, visited the robotics classroom, and the library. The media center at Bernton High school is located at the end of a hallway, with the auditorium also being located off that hallway. The library is easily identifiable. Because the school's mascot has a Greek connotation, Ms. Simmons recreated the library as the Agora, having students craft Styrofoam

columns and a Greek pediment for the entryway, with the word Agora spelled out using the Greek alphabet.

The walls of the hallway leading to the library are covered with photos and biographies of students. Also in the hallway is a large, eye-catching display promoting Banned Books Week, which includes a body, made of book covers and surrounded by crime scene tape. As you step inside the library from the south, the circulation desk is directly in front of the doors with the bookshelves behind the desk. On the opposite wall, large, high windows provide natural light. A screen that can be pulled down from the ceiling is located just in front of the windows. To the left of the door are a couple of workrooms. One room is designated as a parent workroom and it contains a laminator, Nooks and books of interest to parents. A second room is a teacher workroom with equipment available for faculty and staff use. There is a soft seating area and tables and chairs for student use. Mrs. Simmons' spacious office (with a private restroom—luxury!) is located to the left of the entryway. The office contains, in addition to cabinets for storage of the school's video collection, filing cabinets, and a variety of musical instruments in one corner. A number of study carrels, computers, and a presentation area with a white board are located on that east wall. The eastern and western walls both have exits to the outdoors. More tables and chairs are scattered among the bookshelves behind the circulation desk. On either side of the circulation desk are round tables displaying books. One table is full of books that have been challenged or banned somewhere. These books all have a bookmark explaining the reasoning behind the challenge to each book. The other table has books with student created bookmarks. These bookmarks have a photo of the student and a book review they wrote about the specific book. There are

large windows in this library and a variety of international flags hang representing the birth places of the diverse student population.

Ms. Simmons is relatively new to the library, having worked as an elementary and middle school teacher for 10 years before getting media certification. She has been working in the library for 5 years and is the recipient of an exemplary high school library program award from the GaDOE. Ms. Simmons grew up in Liberia, Africa, London, England, and Connecticut and Georgia in the United States, has worked as a youth pastor, developed an educational television show, and is a practicing yoga instructor. She incorporates yoga and music into her lessons, getting students up and moving to help them remember specific points of curriculum. In contrast to Dr. Lynch, she was dressed in a more professional manner.

Upon taking her new assignment as a high school librarian, Ms. Simmons rearranged the library in a number of ways. While working on her media certification, she visited a school library she described as “kind of a children’s museum with books” that inspired her. Her library is filled with world flags depicting the countries of origin of many of her students and with student artwork and projects. There are additional displays of musical instruments and many pictures of students with their book recommendations.

Ms. Simmons has taken on the massive project of rearranging and cataloging her media center to use genre based or Metis shelving instead of a standard Dewey based arrangement. She estimates it will take her several years to complete the task and has enlisted the help of her full time paraprofessional for catalog revisions and of her local Barnes and Noble Bookstore to help assign books to genres. Ms. Simmons indicated her

students and teachers have positively received this change and notes that circulation has gone up since she began this reorganization. She stated,

I had this student even last week and she was over here and she was just so excited. And I said, so do you like this? What do you think?

She said, “I love it. I can get my books.”

Genre-based shelving is a relatively new and controversial system in the library world wherein libraries arrange their materials along the lines of categories found in a book store instead of using the Dewey Decimal System. According to Kaplan, Dolloff, Giffard, and Still-Schiff (2012), students and teachers find the library easier to navigate with the genre-based system, Metis, rather than with Dewey.

Ms. Simmons volunteers over an hour extra each day to her job, arriving at 7:00 AM and staying until 4:00 PM to keep the library open longer with no additional pay. On the day I spent with her, she was in constant motion all day long. I joined her for a professional development presentation with the social studies teachers and her school’s instructional technologist to introduce a new software program using student devices. Her school is just beginning to permit students to use their own wireless equipment in classrooms. She oversees the school’s International Baccalaureate (IB) program and worked with one group of IB students in their classroom on a research lesson. Assigning yoga poses to different research components, she had the students up and moving and then working at computers. At the end of class, the high school students applauded, and remembered the steps required to properly complete their research assignments. She went on to teach an information literacy lesson to a social studies class in the library using her presentation area with students on the computers, field some phone calls, have a

conference with the instructional technologist about an upcoming lesson, and meet with her book club after school.

Though she has not been practicing as long as the other two media specialists in this study, Ms. Simmons also readily communicates her ideas to others, presenting at conferences around the state and sharing her methods with other media specialists. I met her initially at a conference where we were both speakers and her excitement and enthusiasm immediately caught my interest. She recently had attended “our West Georgia RESA they just had a technology summit about a week and a half ago and there was a presentation” by a young instructional technologist who “had his phone taken away” when he was in school. The technologist presented ideas to incorporate student owned devices into the curriculum and Ms. Simmons said, “His whole presentation really opened my eyes to getting to students. That really impacted me.” Ms. Simmons offers a ‘media moment’ at each faculty meeting to demonstrate a program or idea to her teachers with ideas for collaboration. She has a number of Nooks but is frustrated that she has not been able to make them available to students. She said,

We have a parent resource center which is part of our 21st Century community grant...but they don’t really use the resources. And so then the next year they said you’ve got \$10,000.00 left. What do you want to get? And I said well let’s get Nooks because you can put books on them and the books can go home. This year I’m waiting to see and I’ve asked the director, can we start circulating these? They were purchased with a grant designated for parent use. She says no parents are interested in using them and she is looking forward to the time when the grant is over and she can make them available to students.

Ms. Simmons is optimistic about the future of school libraries and has considerable support from her administration. She commented that her recent appointment as head of the school's IB program has made her position more valuable to school administrators. Bernton's school community has taken pride in the library's designation as an exemplary program for the state of Georgia. Her principal uses "the same instrument as the program," that is the exemplary media program rubric, to evaluate her performance. Ms. Simmons stated "it's the best job in the whole school." She loves working with "every teacher, every student" and doing all "the fun stuff."

Laura Murray: Teacher, Bernton High School.

Mrs. Murray has been teaching English for 12 years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English, a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis on secondary education, a gifted teaching endorsement, International Baccalaureate training, and certification to teach Advanced Placement English courses. Mrs. Murray considered her school librarian to be part of the English department team who frequently attends department meetings. She stated Ms. Simmons makes herself available to the teachers "coming by during planning or first thing in the morning, after school, or whenever she can catch us. I mean she's good!" Mrs. Murray seems receptive to new ideas and more than willing to step out of her comfort zone to experiment with new types of lessons. Her daily classroom is a computer lab so she works with Ms. Simmons regularly to find new ways to integrate technology into her curriculum. When I visited, she and her students were working with Ms. Simmons to use an app called InfuseLearning, an online classroom environment, accessible on computers or on personal devices such as phones and iPods.

Sarah Carpenter: Teacher, Bernton High School.

Mrs. Carpenter was out on maternity leave at the time of my visit. We spoke on the phone and she offered to complete the interview in writing, stating it would be easier for her to get her thoughts together that way, especially with a newborn taking up much of her time. Mrs. Carpenter earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Master of Arts in English along with gifted certification and International Baccalaureate training. After teaching freshman English for 1 year at the University of Georgia, she moved to high school 6 years ago. She stated that while “information literacy is encouraged strongly within our state-mandated curriculum frameworks, not much attention is focused on information literacy.” Mrs. Carpenter finds herself working more and more often with Ms. Simmons after the media specialist’s suggestion “turned my boring project into an extended digital storytelling experience” during the previous school year.

Categories for Bernton High School.

The primary categories emerging from the data for this school were Collaboration, Information Literacy Instruction, Professional Development, School Culture, and Teacher Support. Technology Integration was represented more frequently by teachers than the media specialist and will be discussed as well. As in the report of categories for Taylorville High School, teachers and the media specialist reported Administration and Other Duties, Leadership, Literacy, and Professional Service/Dedication less frequently with more emphasis being reflected by the media specialist’s remarks.

Remarks supporting the theme of Collaboration were almost even in number indicating that possibly Ms. Simmons and her teachers (at least the ones interviewed)

have a good working relationship that fosters collaboration. Comments from one of the teachers indicated that she collaborated frequently with the media specialist, “I work with our media specialist in all ways. Like with every unit um, that I teach, I work with her.” Another teacher stated, “With her help, I not only gained a safe space to bring both classes together, but I also learned a lot about how to produce a digital story—something I was completely unfamiliar with before her suggestion!” Ms. Simmons indicated that she keeps a “collaboration binder where I keep everything, which is good because there are classes that will come back the next year.”

Information Literacy was very highly supported as a focus or category for this school media center. The media specialist, Ms. Simmons, had more to say about Information Literacy than the two teachers who were interviewed, but the teachers were also aware of the librarian’s assistance with this skill and its value within the curriculum. Ms. Simmons stated, “A lot of times I share with them and show them resources they tend to use sites if there’s any area that may not be clear enough. The teacher will say “I want them to hear it from you.” One teacher noted,

In my AP lit class one thing that she helped me with is that they [students] have what’s called an author study that they have to do and I had them do a presentation on every author that we read in class and so she introduced us to GALE’s Biography in Context which is a site that we can go to and they can get all the information from it.

Another teacher indicated Ms. Simmons’ involvement in providing instruction in Information Literacy through this comment, “Ms. Simmons gives short presentations and provides links to valuable resources on the media center website.”

Professional Development was also well represented by the responses but Ms. Simmons reported on this more than the teachers interviewed. Ms. Simmons comments supported her efforts to participate in her own professional learning when asked about recent books or conferences stating that she had attended the “West Georgia RESA they just had a technology summit about a week and a half ago.” She also indicated that she provides brief technology tips and news from the library called the Media Moment during scheduled faculty meetings. Her comment reflected a sense of purpose and sharing with others,

So the media moment is a time of sharing and what I usually try to do is when I’ve worked with a teacher, where there’s been training with a teacher or the department on something in particular then whatever project that they’ve worked on if we have a student example, so say with Animoto, we share. [The principal] and I, we have a teacher work with me and share one of the examples.

The influence on School Culture was represented by various comments by the media specialist and teachers. According to Howard (2010) effective school library programs include collaboration and that appears to impact school culture in a positive manner. Previous comments listed indicate that there is a sense of collaboration within the school. Under this heading I included remarks that reflected a positive learning environment. One teacher stated, “She [Ms. Simmons] is extremely helpful in creating cross-curricular activities as well as guiding me and my students in using various forms of technology to create a product.” One teacher who admitted she worked with Ms. Simmons frequently, noted the following example of the way Ms. Simmons helped students and promoted a positive learning environment,

If I let her know in advance what books we are reading, she always pulls the books. Last year students had issues being able to purchase the books. She found them [the books]. I think there were about 30 or 40 that she gathered throughout the state. So extremely helpful.

My observations of the media center corroborated the theme of School Culture as related to the positive learning environment. Ms. Simmons provided extended day services to the students by arriving early and staying late. Her center was decorated with student photos and book recommendations. She also reflects the international nature of the school population by the presence of international flags in the library.

Again, considering the collaborative nature represented earlier, Teacher Support was a strongly emphasized theme emerging from the data. Comments from the media specialist and the teachers indicated an awareness of the ways Ms. Simmons supported the teachers either through providing resources, curriculum assistance, or scheduling classes. According to one teacher,

Ms. Simmons was extremely helpful because as classroom teachers we were not trained to use Movie Maker. We were just told in Common Core [training] that they [students] had to put together a movie or a video using that particular program and so she came into the classroom and she actually taught the lessons and showed us how to use iMovie, how to use Movie maker and she was available to work with the students one on one.

Another teacher indicated Ms. Simmons' helpfulness in locating resources, "I was recently looking for a video on the Islamic Revolution in Iran and Ms. Simmons pointed me towards a few different locations that might provide something useful." Ms.

Simmons' willingness to assist with instruction or to support the teachers was evidenced by her comment, "Sometimes I mention to a teacher, Hey, you know, do you want me to show them [students] something?"

Technology Integration was not reflected very often in Ms. Simmons' conversation but her teachers (the ones I interviewed) expressed their perspectives on the level of technology integration within the school. From my own observations, I saw evidence of the new BYOD program newly adopted in the school. I was able to attend a staff development session on InfuseLearning, a course delivery system. There were Nooks currently unavailable for student use but Ms. Simmons expressed her hopes to be able to circulate those soon. There were computers in the library for students to use and a robotics classroom. Teacher comments also reflected the use of technology, "I can only speak for the English Department, but I know that a lot of us use the Student Reference Center for persuasive essays. I think several of the IB [International Baccalaureate] teachers also use SIRS Global Issues in Context." These are databases available online. Another teacher whose classroom was located in a computer lab had this to say, "There are 34 working computers in here. So a lot of things that we do, we do online."

Case Study 3: Linette Jenkins, Media Specialist, Easton High School.

Easton High School is located in several buildings stretching across two or three city blocks in a small, coastal city. This school, like Bernton, has a more academic focus than Taylorville High or my own school. There are no Career, Technical, and Agricultural (CTAE) classes offered such as welding, auto mechanics, or woodworking. The library at Easton High School is located in on the ground floor in one of the academic buildings. Two walls have banks of windows from the midpoint of the walls to

the ceiling. The library is a long, rectangular room. As you enter the library, you first notice the framed library awards lining the shelf just inside the doorway. The circulation desk is across from the double doors at one end of the library. A coin operated copy machine sits next to the desk for student use. The library is a long, rectangular room with the entry set off center towards one end. To the right of the entryway are tall shelves holding some of the nonfiction collection. The fiction collection and more nonfiction books are to the right of the entrance. Just to the right of the desk is a soft seating area with rocking chairs and magazines in tall spinning racks. Pamphlet racks cover the end caps of shelves just inside the door. The pamphlets provide helpful guides for students. Dr. Jenkins created these guides to offer information about the library's rules, book check out time periods, book lists, and research tips. There are also large posters on the wall with the same information. One rule is that there are to be no food or beverages in the media center but part of my visit coincided with lunchtime and that rule was not enforced. Students were comfortable coming and going with drinks and snacks. The room is airy and collegiate, with large windows and busts of famous authors sitting atop the shelves. The library has a huge glass and wooden birdcage inhabited by one small bird to the right of the entry. Computers are scattered throughout the center of the room and a glass walled computer lab is at the far end of the library. Dr. Jenkins' glass-walled office is at the back of the library near the computer lab.

Dr. Jenkins has been a media specialist for 16 years after some years as a classroom science teacher. She considers herself "innovative" and an "early adapter of computer technology." She frequently utilized the library at her previous school, and the media specialist there asked if she would be interested in getting library certification

because she thought she would enjoy the job. Dr. Jenkins gave it a try before she earned media certification and “never looked back,” acquiring Master’s, specialist, and doctoral degrees. As well as working as a high school librarian, Dr. Jenkins teaches information technology courses as an adjunct professor at a nearby Georgia state university. She has published a book on information technology and frequently writes for professional journals. Dr. Jenkins corresponds regularly with well-known professionals in the school library field and admires colleagues Susan Grigsby and “of course Buffy Hamilton.” She follows others too. “Joyce Valenza is one of my top. If I had to limit to one, if you make me choose one, I would say her. She’s definitely the top.” Dr. Jenkins says, “most of my ideas are just stolen,” and elaborated by explaining that her *Readbox* was an idea she heard about at a conference and decided to try. The eye catching *ReadBox* looks like a RedBox video rental machine but is full of books to check out. Dr. Jenkins stated she tries to give credit for ideas and likes to try new displays and activities she reads or hears about it from other librarians.

She frequently presents at conferences and at the time of the visit had just returned from presenting at the Georgia’s Council of Media Organizations (COMO) conference. Dr. Jenkins said one of the best reasons to attend conferences is to hear about new ideas for reading promotion. She said she would go through her conference notes and materials “and kind of summarize those for the people in my county.” She also shares information with media specialists in the neighboring county, attending their meetings and conferences several times a year. To help pay for her attendance at conferences, she “applied for the GAIT grant,” which she was awarded. “Over 5 years ago they [her school system] stopped providing us money” to attend conferences.

Dr. Jenkins expressed concern about recent cuts to school libraries. Until this year, her school had two full time media specialists but one of those positions was eliminated and she is now the sole media specialist. She said she “was on maternity leave and so I came back to find out” that the second media specialist’s position had been eliminated. “We’ve had a lot of cuts,” she said going on to explain summer hours and supplemental funds for library materials had also been cut in her school system. She does have a full time paraprofessional but the person in that position is new to the library and frequently gets pulled out of the library to cover other areas of the school when people are absent. Dr. Jenkins stated she frequently skips lunch herself to oversee the circulation desk and be available to help students. In addition to media specialist duties, Dr. Jenkins serves as school webmaster and has responsibility for online courseware programs such as Study Island and turnitin.com.

The Easton Media Center used an unusual approach to indicate due dates for materials checked out. A machine similar to a store pricing gun spits out stickers with due dates that are affixed to the front of each book checked out. Dr. Jenkins invited me to roam her shelves and I noted her special collections of books and materials with local interest and reference materials for specific projects. Her shelves were rather full and Dr. Jenkins said it must be “time to weed” as she tried to keep the bottom shelves empty. When those bottom shelves fill, she determines it is time to remove outdated materials.

On the day of my visit, Dr. Jenkins was professionally dressed in a skirt. In the course of our conversation, she also fielded phone calls, answered technology questions from teachers about Study Island and other technology issues, arranged for a couple of collaborative lessons with teachers who were comfortable dropping in, responded to

student questions, and checked out books. Her paraprofessional had just given notice and so Dr. Jenkins explained that her own time would be even more fragmented until a replacement was hired. She added though, she enjoys being busy, saying, “I never have any down time.”

Denise Berry: Teacher, Easton High School.

Ms. Berry initially earned a Bachelor’s degree in Finance then a Master’s in Secondary Education with an emphasis on English. She also holds gifted certification and has been teaching English for 8 years. Ms. Berry teaches American Literature and Advanced Placement Literature at the tenth grade level. She was chosen as STAR teacher this year by one of her students. Georgia’s Student Teacher Achievement Recognition program honors Georgia’s outstanding high school seniors and the teachers they believe have been instrumental in their achievement. She sometimes finds it challenging to encourage her lower level students to become involved in the curriculum. Ms. Berry commented about the impact of the loss of the second media specialist has made on Dr. Jenkins, saying “I don’t know how she’s keeping up with everything” and “I don’t like to burden her since we lost our other media specialist and she’s by herself.”

Ann Shipley: Teacher, Easton High School.

Mrs. Shipley has been teaching for 26 years, all of it in English classrooms. She initially earned a Bachelor’s degree in Communications and then English certification. Mrs. Shipley also holds a Master’s degree and a Specialist’s degree in instructional technology. She teaches ninth grade Literature and Composition and Honors Literature and Composition. She considers her media specialist to be “awesome. She just won an award from the state.” Like Ms. Berry, she is concerned that Dr. Jenkins will have

difficulty “keeping up with everything now that she is alone.” Mrs. Shipley has often consulted Dr. Jenkins for ideas for multimedia projects and research materials. A seasoned professional, while I was interviewing Mrs. Shipley she was juggling my questions and giving directions to students working on a homecoming float.

Categories for Easton High School.

Teacher Support was the most emphasized theme emerging from the data for this school library. Funding and Staff, School Culture, Professional Development, and Information Literacy Instruction were the other most popular categories noted. Technology Integration received some emphasis but was among the lower ranking categories for this school. As in the data reports for the other school libraries in the study, Administration and Other Duties, Collaboration, Leadership, Literacy, and Professional Service/Dedication were represented in the data. However, these categories did not appear to have the same value with the participants as the previously listed categories.

Teacher Support was highly valued by the teachers and media specialist in this school setting. In Dr. Jenkins words, “so we’re constantly the go-to resource person,” and “that’s what we’re here for is support for our teachers.” One of the teachers noted,

I rely on her a lot for I use the media center a lot because my kids do a lot of research, literary analysis. So she will develop web quests. She is always very helpful about um, getting new resources in the media center to help us.

Another teacher’s comment reinforced the theme of Teacher Support in her statement, “she just goes above and beyond. If I send her a quick little email I need such and such, she can get it to me, I mean ASAP. She’s really good.” While we were talking, there

were several interruptions by students, teachers, and phone calls. It appeared that she really was very engaged with providing support to the teachers and students in the school.

The second most recurring theme in the data was Funding and Staff. This theme addressed the issue of budget cuts, loss of staff, lack of resources, and alternative funding sources. Dr. Jenkins' colleagues reflected on her solitary position as media specialist in comments during interviews. One commended her for maintaining a high degree of service even with the loss of the second media specialist position. One stated, "since we lost our other media specialist and she's by herself. The school relies on her so much. I don't like to burden her with anything." Another comment was, "I know she's really stretched this year because she is the only media specialist we have but she's not slacked up on her duties."

Professional Development received more emphasis by the media specialist. This may be the result of her attention to providing resources for the teachers. She also reflected that she viewed success as "really helping the students, helping the teachers succeed. That is my success." She provides Technology Tuesdays and reported "we do websites that they find useful." Dr. Jenkins also indicated she learns from other colleagues in the field through attendance and presenting at conferences, "I follow [Twitter] and admire Susan Grigsby, I talked to her at COMO last week." The teachers interviewed also mentioned the Technology Tuesday. One teacher reported, "Dr. Jenkins does ...Technology Tuesday and sometimes it's about resources like GALILEO or ah different websites."

Information Literacy was more highly reported by teachers than Dr. Jenkins. Teacher comments were reflective again of the support provided by Dr. Jenkins for

instruction and teaching. Regarding the library orientation, one teacher noted “Usually we’ll take our freshmen into the media center. And she’ll kind of guide them through the resources that we have, how to log onto the computer and about where to find everything in the library.” Another teacher stated that Dr. Jenkins “can show them how to access the electronic resources like GALILEO.” Another teacher referred to Dr. Jenkins as a “lifesaver” when it came to helping with teaching her students how to do Glogster and Movie Maker.

School Culture as a theme for the school library was more highly ranked overall by this school. Based on the observations of her library facility and interactions with students and teachers it appeared that she was engaged with students and teachers and that they felt comfortable asking for help or being in the library. One comment that was given stated, “The kids know that they can ask the teachers. And they can always go to the library and ask the media specialist.” When asked about assessment checkpoints, one teacher indicated they had some but, “we can ask Dr. Jenkins and she’ll give us some ideas with that as well.”

The theme with the least number of responses recorded for this school was Technology Integration. However, there seems to be a technology thread woven throughout the Teacher Support comments, Information Literacy Instruction, and Professional Development. In this discussion I will deal with the technology issues revealed in the comments by the media specialist and the teachers. One teacher noted that, “our computers are a little slow. Sometimes and that’s very frustrating in the middle of a lesson.” The same teacher indicated a shortage of computers for her class size, “my classes are so large, I have 35 kids in a class and I have a mobile laptop cart. However, I

don't have enough computers for every kid to have one. That can be very frustrating.”

Dr. Jenkins indicated there was a shortage of computers at times due to the use by

Georgia Virtual students,

They get first dibs on these computers. We have 25 Georgia Virtual in one class.

So, um, you do the math. That doesn't leave many for teacher use. And that's

actually, um, a period where it overlaps with our lunches. We have three lunches

so we have constant kids coming in wanting to use during lunch so we're like...

first come, first served.

Cross Case Analyses

In this section I will report the cross case analysis of all categories across the three school sites and present the themes that emerged from the data. Categories were reviewed for each school site by responses from the media specialists and teachers. The number of responses for each category were tallied and combined as a way to identify the most important categories originating from the data. For Bernton High School the top five categories were Teacher Support, Information Literacy Instruction, Professional Development, Collaboration, and School Culture with Technology Integration, Funding and Staff, Literacy, Administration and Other Duties, Leadership, and Professional Service/Dedication appearing in descending order. For Easton High School the top five categories were Teacher Support, Funding and Staff, Information Literacy, Professional Development, and School Culture. The remaining categories for Easton High School appear in the following descending order: Technology Integration, Leadership, Collaboration, Administration and Other Duties, Professional Service/Dedication, and Literacy.

Taylorville High School categories are ranked as follows: Information Literacy, Teacher Support, Funding and Staff, Technology Integration, Professional Development, School Culture, Collaboration, Administration and Other Duties, Professional Service/Dedication, Literacy, and Leadership. Teacher Support was the most highly reported category and was supported by numerous comments by teachers in all three schools. Comments from the teachers included, “I rely on him a lot,” “so extremely helpful,” and “he works with us a lot with the databases.” Collaboration, though not as highly ranked overall might also be considered a form of teacher support as the media specialist and teacher would work together to produce and deliver instructional lessons as well as engage in assessment of student learning (ALA & AASL, 2010). Dr. Lynch stated he has searched for new ways to collaborate in helping students learn to use “good information in presentations and be able to do it appropriately.” One teacher’s comment reflected the level of support and collaboration offered by the media specialist, “she helped me with that, actually do the lesson.”

The media specialists and teachers frequently mentioned Information Literacy Instruction. Observations also indicated the availability of resources such as the computers to access online databases and the Internet. Some of the schools had wireless networks to promote access to information (ALA & AASL, 2010; Gogan & Marcus, 2013). One teacher expressed this comment, “information literacy to me means you’re able to obtain accurate information when you need it.”

The third most highly reported category overall was Funding and Staff. Media specialists and teachers were aware of the impact of funding shortages and budget cuts currently in place in Georgia (GLMA, 2012c). Comments reflected concern over

requesting assistance because of lack of staff, “don’t like to burden her,” and another related to the loss of a library aide, “more of a hardship on us because he doesn’t have the aide that he used to have.” One media specialist remarked how budget cuts have impacted teachers, “teachers have also taken a big cut.” Two media specialists had library aides, but one of those had lost a second media specialist position. The other media specialist, Dr. Lynch, indicated his library had also lost a second media position as well as the library aide. The category Administration and Other Duties may also be relevant to this category as the media specialists were responsible for activities outside the library such as working with the International Baccalaureate Program, serving as a “member of the leadership team, “school improvement,” “technology committee,” and “Webmaster, Credit Recovery—online.”

Leadership, though not as highly reported as Funding and Staff or Administration and Other Duties, may be considered as relevant in this case. Leadership is necessary for successful program and the media specialists interviewed had been recognized for their exemplary programs. Leadership appeared to be evident by the involvement of the media specialists in the committees listed above (school improvement, technology, and leadership). Also there were comments offered that reflected a leadership role of the media specialists beyond the schools, “was GLMA president,” trying to get a media consortium going,” and one librarian indicated her principal’s support for her leadership in professional development for teachers, “[the principal] and I, we have a teacher work with me and share one of the examples [demonstration of a class project with students].” Dr. Lynch, though somewhat discouraged by the recent budget cuts and reduction in staff, still remained focused on the students and teachers. These behaviors exemplify the

category of leadership in the field. All the media specialists appeared to be leaders within the school and beyond but it appeared to be an accepted norm rather than a remarkable exception.

Professional Development was reported overall as fourth in the combined list of categories. Again the categories of Leadership, Collaboration, and Teacher Support may also contribute to the overall strength of the theme. The media specialists were engaged in providing professional development through the “Media Moment” or “Technology Tuesday” events scheduled in their respective schools. One media specialist referred to her use of professional literature, “I try to read. Magazine over there [Library Media Connection].” Another indicated her following leaders in the field, “I do follow when they have blogs.” All the media specialists referred to conference attendance, “West Georgia RESA... Technology Summit,” and attendance at “COMO” [Council of Media Organizations]. Comments also reflected that the media specialists shared their knowledge when back at their schools, “there are times when you just share...and there are times when you train.”

All schools seemed to have technology in various forms from Kindles and Nooks to wireless support to multiple labs as observed during the time spent in each library. Technology Integration emerged as a category based on the numerous comments from the participants. Though all participants reflected on the positive aspects of the technology there were issues related to accessibility as well as funding to support the infrastructure. One media specialist indicated she has thirty-five desktop computers in the library but “the principal said these computers can only be used by a teacher if there’s any available after the Georgia Virtual.” Another comment reflected other accessibility

issues related to infrastructure, “some days we can’t even get to the Internet.” Positive comments reflected the efforts of the media specialists to provide resources and assistance in Technology Integration. Teachers referred to technology in the use of Movie Maker, iMovie, Glogster, and two of the schools (Easton and Taylorville) were incorporating BYOD. When technology issues arose, teachers were quick to point out the helpfulness of the media specialists, “helped out with technology issues,” “extremely helpful because as classroom teachers we were not trained to use Movie Maker,” “there are a lot of things online he has available.”

School Culture represents comments about the positive learning environment, collaboration, and the student-centered focus of the librarians. Vathauer (2008) and Milbury (2005) both reflected on the impact the librarian has on contributing to a positive school culture. Comments from the participants indicated, a move more towards a learning commons area,” “he’s got a coffee shop up there [Library],” and “they can always go to the library and ask the media specialist.” Observations at each school site revealed open and inviting areas conducive to computer use and a variety of décor that was appealing and welcoming.

Literacy and Professional Service/Dedication each received the same number of coded responses. Literacy comments were related to efforts to promote reading and literacy within the schools (ALA & AASL, 2010). The ALA and AASL refer to the librarian’s role in promoting literacy and being aware of children’s and young adult literature. One librarian has a book club that meets after school. Another offers Kindles for students to use. Dr. Lynch served on the Peach Award committee for several years and provided access to those books for his students. My observations revealed multiple

displays promoting different books. Dr. Jenkins supports literacy through “Teen Read Week,” and the “Drop Everything and Read” program. She stated “we also do a lot of school wide reading promotions.”

Professional Service/Dedication represents comments by teachers and media specialists that indicated the media specialists were dedicated to the profession and serving the students and teachers at their schools. Ms. Simmons stayed beyond the normal school day to keep the library open for students and teachers saying “most teachers leave around 3:10 but we stay open until 4:00,” and from Dr. Lynch, “I’m here from 7:30 to 4:00.” He noted that the school day for teachers is over at 3:15. Teachers reflected less often on this category than the media specialists but comments by one teacher interviewed demonstrated her awareness of the extended service offered by the media specialists, “she is really stretched this year...she just goes above and beyond.” This particular category may also relate the categories of Leadership and Funding and Staff. With the staff reductions mentioned earlier, the media specialists in the study may feel compelled to stay longer in order to provide the level of service they desire.

Themes

Maxwell (2005) detailed the process of coding, or *fracturing* data to facilitate comparisons. After completing the coding step of analysis, meaningful patterns began to emerge from the data indicating categories (Patton, 2002). The goal of this study was to interview and observe school library media specialists in the context of carrying out their duties. A review of the categories through the lens of the research questions (Maxwell, 2005) led to the identification of the following themes originating from the data: School Culture, Collaboration, Information Literacy, Leadership, and Administration.

The theme of School Culture is exemplified by the student-focused practices of each school library media specialist and the engagement with the teachers throughout the day. School culture influences how teachers and students act (Vatthauer, 2008). Teachers corroborated the librarians' efforts to create spaces where students would be comfortable and welcome. Dr. Lynch created special student areas; Mrs. Thomas referred to "social spaces" in the library. One teacher noted how "students know they can ask the librarian." Mrs. Simmons wanted to create a "vibrant and engaging library."

Collaboration is an interactive process that involves educators who work in different roles together to deliver instruction (Rehberg, 2011). This theme illustrated the willingness of the librarians to assist with technology integration, meeting with teachers to plan and implement lessons, and provide resources to support instruction. The theme of Collaboration emerged out of the category of Teacher Support. Teachers also relied on their library media specialists to develop lessons including the Common Core Standards. Additionally, teachers felt they could count on their media specialists to locate and procure resources in the form of books and technology. One teacher at Bernton noted the librarian was "the first person I come to." Another comment reflected the collaboration between media specialist and teacher, "I come to her for help in planning learning experiences. She is "extremely helpful in creating cross curricular activities."

The combination of the two categories Literacy and Information Literacy Instruction formed the theme of Information Literacy. Information Literacy is defined as the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information (ACRL, 2013). All three librarians promoted a variety of forms of literacy, or transliteracy, including, but not limited to technological literacy and reading. "She guides me and my students in using

various forms of technology to create a product,” was one teacher’s comment about her librarian. Each of the school library media specialists provided copyright information and source citation instruction.

Literacy (under the theme of Information Literacy) was remarked on by one participant by mentioning her librarian’s involvement with the Georgia Peach Awards, saying, “he keeps up with the Peach Awards and whatever the up and coming books are.” All three of the school library media specialists sponsor reading teams participating in the statewide Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl or reading clubs.

The theme of Leadership includes the categories of Leadership and Professional Development. Leadership is “the ability to influence or inspire others to achieve shared goals” (Dees et al., 2007). The librarians used professional development opportunities to assist teachers with implementation of Common Core Standards and instructional technology. When I visited Taylorville, Dr. Lynch was assisting teachers to build new websites. These school library media specialists acted as role models in their schools for technology and lesson development. The principal at Taylorville referred to his reliance on Dr. Lynch for many things, saying, “I don’t know what I would do without him.” All three offered professional development in the form of Technology Tuesdays or Media Moments at faculty meetings as well as posting information on the library websites.

The theme of Administration was developed from the combination of funding and staff, professional service/dedication, and administration and other duties. The ALA and AASL (2010) define administration as planning, developing and implementing school library programs. Administration is related to the *behind the scenes* work of the librarian and includes management of resources and staff, completing tasks required to operate an

efficient program, and often other duties as assigned by the school administration. The librarians at Taylorville, Bernton, and Easton all had located alternative sources of funding to provide materials for their patrons. Mrs. Simmons received acclamation from one of her teachers because of her efforts to obtain books needed for a literature class. One teacher remarked on the determination of the librarians to obtain necessary resources with this comment, “she’ll figure out how we can get it.” Each of these librarians volunteered time to their schools outside of their teaching contracts and attended conferences on personal time. One librarian indicated that following a presentation at the state conference for librarians she then presented to a local school system nearby, “I presented at the [system nearby].”

Summary

All three schools included in the study serve grades 9 through 12. Student population ranged from 1,038 to 1,731 students, with Easton being the largest school. Two of the schools were in small towns and one was in a rural location. Each of the schools had fairly large numbers of economically disadvantaged students with a range of 44% to 55% of students considered economically disadvantaged. Bernton and Easton were comprised of 50% and 41% minority students respectively, with Taylorville having 11% minority students (U.S. News & World Report, 2014).

The library media specialists who participated all held advanced degrees. Two of them held doctorates and National Board Certification and the other a specialist degree. All of the librarians worked in other subject areas and grade levels before becoming certified as media specialists. It was evident that all three of these media specialists enjoyed their jobs and worked to provide support to their teachers and students above and

beyond the minimum requirements of the job. Faculty members I met counted on them and did not hesitate to share that view. At Taylorville, I was also introduced to the principal who valued Dr. Lynch's services and indicated a reliance on the librarian to provide assistance in a number of areas. Social studies teachers at Bernton thanked Ms. Simmons for arranging the professional development session and she followed up on information discussed then with her instructional technologist later in the day. Both teachers I spoke with at Easton proudly asked if I was aware that Dr. Jenkins had just won a state media award. All three of these librarians presented themselves professionally and juggled talking with me while at the same time responding to the needs of their teachers and students throughout the course of my visit with each of them. According to Callison (1995), it is not enough for school librarians to understand the mechanics of managing a library; they must also develop a long-range plan for constant improvement. It is evident that each of these media specialists has developed a vision for their library and continually adjusted and changed those plans.

Teachers involved in the study all held at least a master's degree, with one participant also having completed an educational specialist's degree. Their experience ranged from 7 to 26 years. All of the teachers hold additional qualifications; some held certifications in International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, Gifted Education, Adult Education, and Secondary Education.

The primary themes originating from the data revealed a great deal about how the exemplary media programs under the supervision of the media specialists provided service, information, technology, and professional development to their schools even

with the current budget situation in Georgia's schools. The five themes were Collaboration, Information Literacy, Administration, Leadership, and School Culture.

The following chapter will provide a discussion of the results with references to the questions and how the results are related to the AASL standards. A discussion of the conceptual framework as it relates to the findings of the study will also be included. In addition, the limitations and implications of the study will be offered.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Research over the years has indicated that students in schools with certified school library media specialists perform better academically (Baumbach, 2003; Francis, Lance, & Lietzau, 2010; Lance & Hofschire, 2011; Quantitative Resources LLC, 2003; Todd, 2003, 2008; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003). Researchers have linked higher standardized test scores with quality library media programs (Baumbauch, 2002).

Everhart stated that school librarians are being eliminated in many parts of the United States (2011). Their worth has been questioned and found wanting. Achterman (2008) finds it ironic that school districts happily spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on unproven reading programs promising success while cutting library programs, though the library programs been consistently shown to positively correlate with higher test scores. Funding shortages in education have marginalized the importance of school libraries and librarians (Merola, 2011). Schools in Georgia are also eliminating positions in the library where the position of second librarian was cut recently from two of the high schools that were subjects of this research.

In the state of Georgia, several mechanisms are in place for recognition of exemplary high school library media specialists. This study sought to examine the practices and procedures of three commendable school librarians to determine if the methods they use to contribute to their school culture, collaborate, promote print and digital literacies, provide leadership, and manage their libraries and library programs

would indicate techniques in common that could be incorporated by other school librarians. Discovery of shared methods of successful school library media specialists could present insight for practitioners in the field to improve their own programs.

This qualitative case study analyzed the practices and procedures of three exemplary high school media specialists and how teachers work with those media specialists. I chose to explore the ways these librarians effectively fulfill their roles and the aspects of those roles considered by teachers to be the most important.

Conceptual Framework and Results of the Study

Transliteracy was defined as learning to explore and use a variety of information in a range of technologies and formats (Thomas et al., 2007). In reviewing the categories and findings revealed through the data for this study of school librarians and teacher colleagues, I believe transliteracy was addressed in all three school sites in the study. Dr. Jenkins at Easton High School provided instruction in Movie Maker, iMovie, and Glogster for teachers and students offering an avenue of expression and learning not used before in connection with the Common Core Curriculum in their school. Dr. Lynch at Taylorville obtained a grant to provide Nooks for his students as an alternative to print. A learning commons approach was also in the early stages of development at the Taylorville High School Media Center. Ms. Simmons at Bernton High School appeared enthusiastic in promoting technology literacy and use in her schools and was viewed by one teacher as “helpful in creating cross-curricular activities as well as guiding me and my students in using various forms of technology to create a product.”

Overall transliteracy formed a solid foundation for the study based on the observations in the school sites and recorded comments from the media specialists.

Students were observed engaged in the use of computers and Nooks in the libraries. Teachers were comfortable asking for assistance with technology tasks during my interview and observation sessions with the media specialists.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists contribute to school cultures?

School culture is comprised of an inner reality influencing the way teachers and students think and how they act (Vatthauer, 2008). Standard 4 of the Initial Standards for Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010) advocates positive learning environments (School Culture theme) in order to help students focus on learning and achievement, thus, it is incumbent upon the media specialist to cultivate a positive atmosphere in the school library. Shannon (2009) found principals value a librarian who can make the media center a relaxing and comfortable environment. Research question one examines what contributions are made by media specialists to develop and promote a setting conducive to a positive learning environment. According to Howard (2010), viewing the library as a welcoming and vibrant place helps contribute to collaboration and to student success. Cox (2013) contends that creation of student friendly environments promotes literacy. Woolls (2004) stated the school library should be constantly reassessed and updated to encourage a welcoming learning environment. Campbell (2010) suggests the school library have formal and informal areas filled with objects to inspire the imagination as well as signage to indicate how to find materials.

Based on observations and interviews, all of these media specialists created unique, student-centered physical spaces where faculty and students could work and

congregate. Ms. Simmons and Dr. Lynch were, at the time of my visit, both in the process of redesigning their spaces to be more attractive to their students. Dr. Lynch was working to turn his former office into a *swap space* for students to exchange personally owned books. He has repurposed part of a workroom for a student coffee shop, and encourages students to bring lunch and eat in the media center. Dr. Lynch, enthusiastically discussing that reconfiguration, said he would “really like to expand that so it’s more of a learning commons.” A teacher commented that Dr. Lynch had “a coffee shop up there but there’s really nowhere for them to sit,” lamenting the lack of space in her school’s small library. Despite the size limitation of the Taylorville library, at lunchtime there were about a dozen students who had appeared with their lunch trays. They were quietly playing games and talking while they ate. Two student workers manned the checkout desk and enthusiastically asked everyone who entered how they could help. Several other students were availing themselves of offerings from the cappuccino machine in the old workroom, where a table was also set up.

Ms. Simmons models her library after an elementary library she visited in the course of earning her media certification. She enthusiastically described it as a “very vibrant” library, with “lots of plants, lots of light, and a performance area.” Ms. Simmons wants her library to be an engaging place, “kind of a children’s museum with books.” This philosophy aligns with that of Campbell (2010), who advocates filling the library with specimens from the natural world to encourage curiosity and investigation. Ms. Simmons’ library is inviting, with flags representing student birthplaces hanging from the ceiling, pictures of students, and areas of soft seating where students congregate in small groups. Ms. Simmons spearheaded a multicultural project designed to highlight

the diversity of students attending Bernton High School. She delved into the student information system to learn students' birthplaces, and then organized a project where foreign-born students were interviewed and featured. The hallway leading to her media center is full of photos of international students and stories about their lives. Inside the library, flags representing the countries of their birth lend color and vibrancy to the room.

Ms. Simmons is also in the midst of an ambitious project to reorganize her library in the genre, or bookstore, shelving plan instead of using the Dewey Decimal System. She is in the process of recataloging the entire library to reflect her new system. She said she got tired of trying to explain why the mystery books were "spread out" and that while she had "binders with suggested books," students still could not seem to find what they wanted. She brought in a consultant from the Borders bookstore chain ("actually, the husband of one of the teachers who is between jobs") and "went through and we just made up a little mark there" to change the book categories. Her new genre based system is popular with students. She says they are "just so excited," with at least one student telling her "I love it. I can get my books." Ms. Simmons said she believes her new system also benefits teachers because she has tailored the system expressly to assignments. For example, "the 9th grade English teachers, they do a biography/autobiography project and so they bring their classes in and so they'd come in and they'd say so I want a sports biography" and they were everywhere but now "you know, all of the sports, all of the athletics are in one place." Mrs. Carpenter, an English teacher at the school, has found it helpful to be "pointed towards a few different locations that might provide something useful" in the way of research materials. Mrs. Murray expressed appreciation that Ms. Simmons "pulls books" for projects and says that

Bernton's students "rely on them" in the library a lot to find the things they need. The international flavor Ms. Simmons brought to the library as well as her rearrangement of the books into genres indicates a respect for diversity. One genre section is assigned as African American works. This falls under the theme of Literacy and Reading to address the diverse needs and interests of the students.

My visit to Bernton was during Banned Books Week and Ms. Simmons had set up several displays promoting books that had been banned from a library somewhere. Just outside the entry to her library was an outline of a 'body' made of book covers. It was surrounded with crime scene tape. Inside the library books that have been banned somewhere were displayed on tables with laminated cards inside explaining when, where, and why the books were removed from a library. This display generated quite a lot of interest. One of her English teachers, Mrs. Murray, commenting on library activities at Bernton for Banned Books Week, said, "students enjoy going up there. And coming back and telling me what we're reading we shouldn't be. Romeo and Juliet. And I say you shouldn't be reading anything you know, based on that information on that banned books list." Ms. Simmons comes in early and stays late, donating time, in order to keep the library open longer hours.

At Easton, the library is welcoming and open, with natural light, displays of how-to pamphlets offering book lists and guides to using the library's resources, and a screensaver promoting the Georgia Peach books running on all the computers. The pathfinders, signage, and preponderance of materials promoting reading fall under the theme of promotion of literacy.

While there are numerous computers in the library, Dr. Jenkins monitors the Georgia Virtual School students and they have first priority on computer usage. She has 35 desktop computers in the library but “the principal said these computers can only be used by a teacher if there’s any available after the Georgia Virtual. They have first dibs. We have 25 Georgia Virtual in one class. So, um, you know, do the math.” Lack of access to computers is sometimes a bone of contention with teachers. This sub-theme of frustration with and lack of sufficient numbers of technology was voiced by all participating media specialists and teachers.

Mrs. Thomas, at Taylorville, commented that “some days we can’t even get to the Internet.” During my visit at Bernton, students in Mrs. Murray’s English class were trying to log onto a classroom management website called Infuse Learning through wireless devices but very few students were able to log on. Ms. Simmons explained the wireless network just was not robust enough to support so many devices, saying, “it’s frustrating. You’ve got the technology and you can’t use it.” At Easton, Mrs. Shipley related that her classes have approximately 35 students and the mobile laptop carts do not hold enough computers for each student in a class to work on their own.

Dr. Simmons said there are generally Virtual School students to monitor at lunchtime and so she said, “I usually don’t even get a lunch. I’m too busy to take the time to do it. So she’ll [the paraprofessional] be out and I’ll be the only one in here with 29 virtual students to monitor, anyone that comes in with a lunch pass, and any teachers that come in with their classes.”

Like Dr. Lynch and Ms. Simmons, Dr. Jenkins sacrifices her own time to be available for students. Each of these media specialists exhibited generous behavior to put

students first, which illustrates a sub-theme of dedication. Dedication falls under the major categories of Administration and Management as well as Advocacy and Leadership through demonstrating strong commitments to patrons and the profession.

Research Question 2: How do Georgia's exemplary high school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to implement information literacy instruction into the curriculum?

Research Question 2 investigated how these librarians collaborated with classroom teachers to incorporate information literacy instruction into student learning. Standard one details the expectation that school librarians not only demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning but that they collaborate with other members of the learning community to design and implement instruction to engage students and help them develop critical thinking skills.

Media specialists at each of the schools keep paper and pencil schedules and notes about lessons and collaboration. The Initial Standards for Preparation of School Librarians (2010) promote creation of integrated units of inquiry by teachers and librarians in order to meet the needs of diverse learners and strengthen all stakeholders. The theme of collaboration ran through all interviews with teachers and media specialists. There were a variety of ways to initiate collaboration. Email, sign up notebook, and communications arising from faculty meetings were all methods employed to initiate collaborative lessons. Ms. Simmons works with teachers and the technology specialist to bring them together for collaboration and integration of technology into their curriculum. She also attends department meetings when possible to plan lessons with her teachers and try to pinpoint possible issues and student stumbling blocks in advance. Her English

teachers indicated they believe this practice precludes problems when the students actually begin work on the planned assignments, saying “we took a look at the things that we were going to have to use and what we thought we would need assistance with and so we had her meet with us about a month ago.” Dr. Jenkins is busier than ever with the loss of the second media specialist so Ms. Berry said to arrange collaboration, she comes to “stick my head in here and see” if she is available to set up a joint lesson. Mrs. Thomas told me she “will talk to him about what we’re teaching and he will suggest some background materials,” adding that he “emails all the time about things that go with what we’re doing.” These examples also illustrate the ways Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins collaborate and provide resources and serve as information specialists.

On Tuesdays, Dr. Lynch “opened the lab back here so that they can just come in and work” with him nearby for help. Ms. Simmons has “a collaboration binder where I keep everything. Which is good because there are classes that will come back next year” for a similar assignment. She has looked at online scheduling programs but “would much rather have the binder out there because they come here and you know I can engage in conversation.”

Interviews with teachers indicated that one of the most valued contributions of their media specialists was to locate and provide resources (Teacher Support), indicating the media specialist will “find materials, anything we need” and “suggest some background materials.” One of Dr. Lynch’s teachers appreciated that her media specialist kept the faculty informed of online resources, saying, “He tries to let us know as teachers they’re available because we’re not always able to be masters of it.” Another teacher appreciates help with “online sources and also with movies.” One English teacher at

Bernton, finding herself short about 30 books for a class study expressed gratitude that Ms. Simmons tracked down enough from other libraries to put them in the hands of all her students. “She’s definitely, definitely an asset...she’s a cut above because I’ve worked at different schools systems before and I know this is not typical,” said Mrs. Murray of her media specialist Ms. Simmons. In addition to serving as information specialists, procurement of materials indicated these librarians are meeting the challenge of administering their libraries competently.

The ALA and AASL (2010) standards call for flexible and open access in print, non-print, and digital formats. Exemplifying a theme of providing access to learning resources, all three media specialists have a significant online presence to provide pathfinders and additional help for their faculty and students. Each of them curates an extensive library website with reference materials and resources. Easton’s website has book talks in the form of podcasts, copyright information, and a link to a YouTube channel for the school, reading lists, eBooks, and technology tips. Dr. Jenkins provides additional pathfinders in the form of brochures available near the circulation desk. Taylorville’s library website offers reading lists, database information, award winning books, links to testing practice sites, and samplings of new materials available in the library. The library website at Bernton curated by Ms. Simmons provides links to research databases, book lists, music resources, and links to video resources. Mrs. Murray, a teacher at Bernton, uses the media center website often. She appreciated information presented in preplanning workshops being made available online. “Just look on my website” was the answer several times in the course of the conversation with the media specialists. Mrs. Murray was complimentary about the presentation concerning

copyright and source citation created by Ms. Simmons and made available online, saying “I was excited about it you know to learn about it and to know that hey, it wasn’t OK to copy a whole chapter here and to know how to do it.” These practices also serve to exemplify the theme of leadership in providing best practices and professional development. The teachers clearly appreciate the support.

All of these media specialists illustrated competence and awareness of the teaching aspect of their position and of current educational standards. Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins all noted the changes the new Common Core Standards, where classroom and library instruction intersect, are beginning to affect the way lessons are designed and implemented. Dr. Lynch said information literacy “with the new core standards will be integrated better” into the curriculum, saying “the Common Core has got a lot of information literacy interwoven into the whole process” and that school librarians are “going to have to grab ahold and go with it.” Ms. Simmons said there “is a lot more awareness now” of integrating literacy throughout the curriculum. Dr. Jenkins stated “information literacy, to me, means you’re able to obtain accurate information when you need it.” She added “if you think you can google you think you’re information literate and you aren’t” and that “everyone hits it [information literacy] heavy now with common core.”

Teachers indicated they are relying on their librarians for guidance in integrating the new standards into their curriculum. Mrs. Murray said Ms. Simmons was incredibly helpful because “for Common Core, last year I mean everything was so new and we felt so overwhelmed” and Ms. Simmons “was a tremendous help because I didn’t even know where to begin” with the technology aspects she was trying to integrate into the first

lesson she developed using Common Core Standards. Mrs. Carpenter, who also works with Ms. Simmons, said that the Common Core Standards will positively influence the value placed on information literacy and appreciates “the ability to modify frameworks as given to us by the state.”

Ms. Simmons believed that the Common Core will bring more “focus on the literacy standards.” Mrs. Murray, one of the English teachers at Bernton, lauded the librarian for helping the teachers begin working with the Common Core standards, saying, “at the beginning, we felt so overwhelmed but she helped us.” Dr. Jenkins offered the thought that Common Core requirements calling for incorporation of informational texts will help teachers “see more value in information literacy” and hold teachers and students to higher standards. Miss Chamness, an English teacher at Taylorville, is enthusiastic about the Common Core. She volunteered the idea that more value needs to be placed on information literacy because “considering that’s kind of the world we live in right now, if we don’t teach kids anything else, it’s to actually know where to go to research and not just to believe everything online to be truth.” Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins all indicated their beliefs that implementation of the Common Core Standards will help school librarians and information literacy play a larger role in schools.

Promotion of information literacy is considered an essential component of the job of school librarian (Cox, 2013; GLMA, 2012b; Marcoux, 2010). Media specialists fulfill the important role of technology collaborator. School librarians are well placed to help teachers customize and integrate technology tools into project-based learning (Lowe, 2000). A project dreaded by teachers at Bernton turned into one of the most positive

experiences of the year because of Ms. Simmons' involvement. Students were required to interview a community member and then create a movie about their findings. Mrs. Murray had no experience with software for creating a movie but the librarian joined in and walked teacher and students through the technology components of the lesson (Technology Integration). Mrs. Carpenter considered that the "digital storytelling unit ended up being one of the highlights of the year." Teachers embraced the venture and students did an excellent job, turning the "project into an extended digital storytelling experience." Mrs. Murray commented that while she has worked at several schools, "this is the first school where I feel like my media specialist is truly an expert in media, not just a keeper of the books."

Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins all work to promote reading and transliterate learning. At Bernton, Ms. Simmons, initiated a school wide literacy day several years ago celebrated by most of the school. Ms. Simmons also sponsors a student book club and does book talks, "primarily with the English classes," although she has also collaborated in book talks with science teachers to encourage students to read books with "some sort of theme with the environment in it." Reading activities are included in every class on Reading Across the Curriculum Day at her school (Literacy). All of the media specialists promote the Georgia Peach books with displays and screensavers about those books. Mrs. Thomas commented that Dr. Lynch "seems to keep up with the Peach awards, the, you know, whatever is coming up, the up and coming books," apparently unaware that her media specialist has been serving on the Peach committee for several years. The English teacher obviously appreciated his knowledge concerning books popular with the students. Other books are promoted by all of the media specialists

through lists in the catalog and print handouts. Dr. Jenkins displays pamphlets with book lists for various genres near her circulation desk.

All of the media specialists offer instruction on Web 2.0 technologies and use of new formats (Professional Development). Mrs. Carpenter and Mrs. Murray cited numerous technological and Web 2.0 tools introduced by Ms. Simmons: iMovie, Animoto, Prezi, and Movie Maker. Two of the schools had Nooks and Kindles though they were only in student hands at one of the locations. Bernton's e-Book readers were purchased with a grant and may currently are only available for use by parents. One school, Easton, has begun to invest heavily in e-Books promoted and linked from the media center's website. Dr. Lynch and Dr. Jenkins both have a competitive reading team that participates in the statewide Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl.

Banned Books Week activities were planned at all schools to varying degrees. Taylorville High School simply had a list of books that had been banned. Dr. Jenkins tweeted about banned books. Ms. Simmons created several displays about Banned Books. Mrs. Carpenter, an English teacher at Bernton, used this activity as an example of the way Ms. Simmons provides support so that teachers can help "improve the open-mindedness of my students and help them to view situations from a variety of perspectives." During my visit, about a dozen students were pulling books off, reading the reasons, and starting discussions with their friends.

These media specialists demonstrated they are literate in a range of areas, transliterate, and ready to assist with technology projects. Dr. Jenkins' teachers were happy to have help learning to use Glogster and Movie Maker when incorporating those technologies into the curriculum. "She's a lifesaver. She actually did the lesson," said

one teacher who works with Dr. Jenkins. Teaching students about new technologies falls in the area of several categories: teaching, technology, and literacy.

Two of the media specialists often present at faculty meetings. Ms. Simmons presents what she calls tidbits of information at each and every meeting, calling it a media moment. All of the media specialists routinely email the entire faculty and specific teachers items they will find of interest and websites they may find useful. According to Mrs. Thomas, Dr. Lynch “communicates across email” and “emails all the time about things that go with what we’re doing.” When discussing new resources, he says, “mainly promotion is by email.” At Bernton, Ms. Simmons’ teachers appreciate it when she backs up her professional development with emails. Mrs. Murray commented that she “had put together an entire presentation workshop and she even emailed to us.” Mrs. Carpenter at Bernton as well is always pleased to get an “email from time to time that details new resources.”

At each school, the librarian has met the needs for making information accessible through providing orientation early in the school year for new students wherein they are given information about how to use databases and locate resources in the library. All of the teachers interviewed mentioned orientation. Miss Chamness, an English teacher at Dr. Lynch’s school commented, “he always does like a whole introduction to databases and the reference center in the library.” These librarians also serve as school leader and instructor for copyright and source citation in their schools. Mrs. Murray expressed appreciation of a copyright workshop conducted by Ms. Simmons, saying “she talked to us about copyright violations and then she put it in writing. That helped us.” She continued, saying if “we’re going to hold our students accountable for you know,

plagiarism, if they're using things that don't belong to them then we need to follow the same rules." Dr. Jenkins administers Turnitin.com, a paid, web-based program to check for plagiarism and proper citation. Dr. Lynch stated he formerly helped create rubrics and information literacy lessons but he no longer has time to be involved and that the teachers are the ones responsible for most of the information literacy lessons now.

School library media specialists Ms. Simmons and Dr. Jenkins both have developed lessons using Movie Maker and iMovie to collaborate with teachers in the creation of 21st Century projects for their students. Mrs. Shipley declared Dr. Jenkins to be "a lifesaver with Movie Maker" when her class had difficulties with that assignment. Mrs. Murray said students' presentations were a lot better because Ms. Simmons had been "available to work with students one on one." Mrs. Shipley's students are expanding their technology repertoire with the use of Glogster, aided by Dr. Jenkins. Mrs. Murray's students are developing their Prezi skills with Ms. Simmons' help. Dr. Lynch is available to work with students in the computer lab adjoining his media center on their technology projects and issues.

All of the school library media specialists provide instruction in the use of databases. Instruction in use of GALILEO was offered primarily to whole classes and to faculty members during media moments and professional development sessions. Additional subscription databases, notably Gale, are paid for by media funds and offered by all three. Miss Chamness of Taylorville High says she tells students "you've got to go get your sources through GALILEO," while Mrs. Thomas at the same school says it's a struggle because "they just don't exactly...They want to go to ask.com or google.com." Dr. Lynch's students are encouraged to rely on databases he pays for out of the library

budget, and he offers short research lessons for students on the use of those to which he subscribes as well as GALILEO. He coaches teachers in the use of “a wide variety of online databases that we use including GALILEO. We have the Gale Students in Context that we use and Grolier online.”

GALILEO includes a tool for identifying information about usage statistics. A check of the statistics for these three schools is imprecise because breakdown is not possible by school; the smallest unit is that of a school district. Nevertheless, data appearing in Figures 1, 2, and 3 serves as a general indicator corroborating usage. Statistics indicate that the database is being used more heavily each year in each school district visited. Use of GALILEO’s databases indicates not only fulfillment of stipulations in Georgia’s rubric for exemplary media programs (GaDOE, 2012) but falls under the broad categories of providing access to resources, promoting digital literacy, and a sub-theme of ethical use of information.

Assistance with embedding technology into lessons by all three of these media specialists illustrates their capacity to help students and teachers move toward transliteracy. According to (Thomas et al., 2007), today’s learners must be able to explore and use a variety of information in a range of technologies and formats. Higher order thinking skills required by the Common Core Standards are implicit in the pursuit of transliteracy (Loertscher, D. V., & Marcoux, E. (2010). Technological literacy and reading literacy are tied to one another (Jaeger, 2011) and span the curriculum, involving every subject area. All of the media specialists collaborate with teachers to create assignments blending technology with other types of learning and the products of

research. These products have changed due to the impact of technology (Cooper & Bray, 2011).

Research Question 3: How do Georgia's exemplary high school media specialists serve as leaders in their schools through management and administration of library programs?

According to Shannon (2009), it is important for principals to provide opportunities for leadership responsibilities for school library media specialists. The three school library media specialists interviewed have earned numerous degrees and additional certifications. Each of them has earned a specialist's, or 6-year degree. Two of the three have also earned doctorates (Table 3). All of the media specialists participate in and contribute to a larger network of colleagues throughout the state and country. They all presented at conferences and participate in a greater network of colleagues, sharing ideas and information. Mrs. Shipley, of Easton High mentioned proudly that Dr. Jenkins had just presented at a conference and "she just won an award from the state. I know you saw that." All of the media specialists involved have served on various committees at local and state levels. Dr. Lynch is leading a drive for development of conferences for librarians in his area of the state, saying, "we're trying to get a media specialist consortium going." Two of the media specialists have been officers in the GLMA. I met Ms. Simmons the first time after attending a presentation of hers at the Georgia Summer Library Institute several years ago. Dr. Lynch and Dr. Jenkins have published numerous articles in professional journals, and they all readily share with other librarians at every opportunity. "For the past 5 years, I have presented at a conference every year," said Dr.

Jenkins. She shares information learned at conferences with other librarians in her school district and librarians who work in nearby school districts.

Each of them serves on a range of committees within their school and as administrator for various school software programs and initiatives. So, all of these effective school library media specialists are well educated, continuously learning more and continuously sharing information with peers, colleagues, and students. Dr. Jenkins expressed her purpose succinctly, saying she is “here for support for our teachers...anybody we can support.”

One common characteristic of Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins is dedication to their profession as evidenced by their completion of various educational degrees and attendance at conferences, often on their own time. All of the media specialists appear to be lifelong learners with a wide array of interests. Dr. Lynch is an avid sports fan, donating his time to attend most of the school’s athletic events and record them for the yearbook. In addition to yoga, Ms. Simmons integrates music into many of her lessons, sharing a lesson about biomes where she used “*The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, *Rolling on the River*, and *The Horse with No Name* for the desert” to spark student interest in different environments. She has a variety of musical instruments in her office she uses with classes. Dr. Jenkins shared some of her knowledge of birds, acquired after the library birds attacked one another. She separated them, giving one bird to a teacher to bring about peace.

All of the media specialists have a wide network of far-flung contacts with whom they compare notes and share information. Dr. Lynch frequently posts on the Georgia Library Media ListServ to assist other librarians around the state. Ms. Simmons

considers the LM_Net ListServ part of her own professional development, saying, “being a member of LM_Net, I hear about a lot of things there.” Dr. Jenkins, in addition to working full time at her school, works as an adjunct technology professor at a nearby university. They all go above and beyond the duties outlined in their job descriptions. In addition to attending conferences for their own professional development, they all share successes. Two of them are frequent contributors to professional journals and all have participated in state library organizations, with Dr. Lynch and Dr. Jenkins serving in leadership positions for those organizations.

Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons and Dr. Jenkins all offer various types of professional development to their school’s faculty members. Dr. Lynch and Dr. Jenkins make themselves available one day a week, called “Tech Tuesdays” to assist individual or small groups of teachers with their specific technology problems by appointment. Dr. Jenkins, who has corresponded with Dr. Lynch and knows him through state professional organizations said she “stole the Tech Tuesday idea” after hearing him speak about it at a conference. All three of these librarians provide a multitude of resources on their websites. All three of the librarians have been involved with multicultural projects. Ms. Simmons is working to expand the Literacy Across the Curriculum day she started at Bernton High School to all schools in her school system. All of the media specialists lead professional development both through their web presence and through offerings at faculty meetings and in-service days. Dr. Lynch was the recipient of an International Technology award for collaboration with foreign language teachers on a project designed to allow students to explore countries around the world. The project incorporated

PowerPoint, a wiki, email contact with foreign embassies, Photo Story software, and video recording of presentations.

Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins all serve on their school's leadership team and on the school's technology committee. After attending a conference, these media specialists return to school with new ideas to share with their teachers. Ms. Simmons began implementing changes at her school after attending the West Georgia RESA Technology Summit. She advocated for becoming a BYOD school after she saw the power of allowing students to use their own wireless devices. She said the presenter "opened my eyes to getting students really involved in their learning" after telling about having his phone taken away in high school for using it to take notes. Her school is now moving toward becoming a BYOD school.

Each of these media specialists has a unique approach to managing and administering their program but there were commonalities (Administration). Each works under slightly different circumstances. Two media specialists have full time aides. One has only student assistants. The others have student assistants in addition to their full time aides. Two of the media specialists formerly worked with a second full time librarian as well as an aide. Now one of those has only an aide and the other must rely only on student help.

Ms. Simmons was reorganizing her library to the book store/genre model instead of Dewey Decimal order. Dr. Lynch purchased a number of display stands when a local bookstore went out of business and so is able to display single copies of books on shelf tops all over the library. During my observation, I recorded student interest in these displays. The books were face out so they could be more easily seen and the covers

seemed to catch students' attention more readily than those books shelved traditionally. Dr. Jenkins had a wealth of informational pamphlets about book lists, genres, and how-to information. Dr. Lynch and Dr. Jenkins had screensavers promoting the Georgia Peach books on their computers. All three had a range of promotional displays scattered around the library, though the two larger libraries had more. There just was not room at Taylorville for much else.

All of the librarians discussed weeding techniques. Dr. Lynch stated he needed to weed and clear out many of the books that were dated or in bad repair. Dr. Jenkins told me she tried to keep her bottom shelves clear of books and when she was forced to use those shelves to accommodate her collection, it was time to weed. Ms. Simmons began weeding when she began her restructuring project and weeding continues as she works toward completion of that task.

Teachers repeatedly cited locating and providing resources as the most valued contribution from their media specialists. "Whatever we need, she'll figure out how to get it." Technology help appeared as the second most appreciated role of the librarians. Dr. Lynch, Ms. Simmons, and Dr. Jenkins all work hard to manage their budgets and time in order to provide necessary resources to support the curriculum of their schools.

Administration: Technology Issues.

Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with technology infrastructures at their schools. All of the librarians agreed the network infrastructure at their schools causes frustration and that they were not able to teach as much about new Web 2.0 technologies as they would like. Dr. Lynch says his school "is nine years old now, and so some of the technology is getting sort of aged." Despite that, he says, "you just do what you can" to

make things happen. At Easton, Mrs. Shipley has similar concerns, relating, “I don’t have enough computers for every kid to have one. So we have to do a lot of, you know, partnering. And that’s been kind of challenging and difficult.” Dr. Jenkins stated that Easton’s teachers “really can’t complain that they can’t get their hands on a computer” but she does have a number of computers reserved for Georgia Virtual School students, taking them out of use for other students and faculty members.

Ms. Simmons says even “when the Internet is cooperating...our infrastructure is not very good.” Taylorville’s Mrs. Thomas said “you can go to the Internet when the Internet’s working but that’s our problem. It’s the infrastructure for technology.” She added that teachers are unable to access streaming video and filters make it difficult at time to access specific information, citing “when I look up Nazi when we’re doing Night that becomes a problem.” She said online resources are a “plethora of riches but it’s caused problems” as she discussed the types of sites blocked at her school (YouTube and social networking sites) and the inability to access the wireless network. Also at Taylorville, Miss Chamness expressed frustration with funding and technology (Funding and Staff), saying that the school “can’t afford to buy Great Gatsby sets so it’s really difficult for us to get the things we need. She went on to discuss her “very nice SmartBoard that works occasionally” and her dismay about the *iffy* Internet connection. At Bernton, Mrs. Murray commented that “the Internet has been up and down,” but she said if she gives her technology department enough advance notice, they “can make it happen.”

Teachers at Bernton High seemed to have a bit more success with their infrastructure. Mrs. Murray says only two of the computers in her assigned lab were not

working at the time of the observation and that the Internet “has been better” this school year though Mrs. Carpenter believed technology is often not accessible. Mrs. Shipley at Easton expressed frustration that their server goes down often and the computers are slow. “That’s really the main barrier—technology,” was her comment.

Administration: Funding and Staff.

One unexpected issue that arose out of the teacher interviews was that of their new hesitation to ask for help from their media specialist, realizing that the media specialists have more responsibilities with less time and money to accomplish them. Teachers interviewed articulated concerns about asking their media specialist for help in the face of personnel cuts. All of the librarians mentioned cuts to libraries and library positions that are occurring all over the country: two of the three have been directly impacted with staff reductions.

In the past, two full time media specialists and a full time paraprofessional staffed the library at Taylorville. Now Dr. Lynch runs the library solo, with only the help of students. Furthermore, he has been told that for the next school year his time will be split between the high school and the middle school next door. Two media specialists in the Easton school system retired at the end of the 2012-2013 school year and the school board took the opportunity to reduce their total number of librarians, moving the second librarian at Easton High to an elementary school. Dr. Jenkins’ paraprofessional resigned and, while there will be a replacement, at the time of my visit she was running her library alone as well. Her budget for purchase of materials has been cut about 25%. Easton’s school system formerly paid for all media specialists to attend one conference per year

but now it is up to the media specialists to find funding. Dr. Jenkins has been able to cover her expenses with grants, though she says, “it’s an uphill battle” to do so.

Ms. Simmons does have a full time paraprofessional, but with a student population larger than that of Taylorville’s she has never had a second media specialist. Mrs. Thomas at Taylorville related her reluctance to ask Dr. Lynch for help because “it’s hard for him to leave the library for any long amount of time” and because the loss of the second media specialist and paraprofessional, he “had to curtail what he has to do.” Mrs. Thomas expanded on that, saying “he’s not able to travel as much as was, to go to conferences, maybe pick up new things that way.” Dr. Lynch expressed that time management now is his biggest challenge, saying, “it’s a huge thing because you know when you’re responsible for so many things, information literacy has become just a small sliver of what I try to get done here during the day.” Miss Chamness stated she was sometimes “a little confused about what he can offer us” now because of time limitations.

At Easton, Dr. Jenkins expressed dismay about the loss of her colleague, the second media specialist, who was relocated to an elementary school. In the past, her school system has paid registration fees for media specialists to attend conferences but now “it’s like an uphill battle just to get the days off and get any kind of support.” Her school system no longer has extended media center hours, and more furlough days have been added to the school year. Mrs. Shipley, also at Easton, commented that Dr. Jenkins is “really stretched this year because she is the only media specialist” now.

These concerns are confirmed elsewhere in the country. “Having a full-time librarian is becoming something of a luxury in Chicago’s more than 600 public schools” (Vevea, 2014). According to Stripling (New, 2014), the majority of homework assigned

requires a digital environment and certified school librarians can help students distinguish reputable online sources. New (2014) quoted Anthony, executive director of the National League of Cities, in saying “libraries are a key part in making sure the United States can remain globally competitive.” New explained that the federal budget proposed for 2015 has no funding for libraries and cut \$2 million from the Library Services and Technology Act.

The most obvious characteristic these media specialists have in common, I believe, is that they all really enjoy the job. While Dr. Lynch is frustrated with the cuts in staffing and funding, he says, “I still like what I do...I used to love what I did but now it’s just a like. I still like it a great deal.” Ms. Simmons enjoys knowing “you’ve made a difference. Sometimes you have immediate success. Sometimes you have to wait.” According to Dr. Jenkins, “It’s the best job in the whole school. I get to work with every teacher, every student. I get to do all the fun stuff!”

Major emerging categories included Teacher Support, Information Literacy Instruction, Funding and Staff, Professional Development, Technology Integration, School Culture, Collaboration, Administration and Other Duties Literacy, Professional Service/Dedication, and Leadership. According to Lowe (2000), school librarians have been pioneers in helping to integrate technology into the curriculum.

The theme Teacher Support includes collaboration, knowledge of the standards, and recognizing and meeting the needs of diverse learners. The theme of Leadership and Administration and Other Duties incorporates Professional Development and Teacher Support as well as networking with peers in the library community and sharing knowledge. Contributing positively to School Culture can also be considered related to

Leadership and Administration and Other Duties because librarians must be effective and competent managers of their libraries in order to create positive, student-centered learning spaces. Another relevant activity is that of locating and providing access to needed resources, hardware as well as print and digital resources, for students and teachers covered under the theme of Teacher Support.

Categories that emerged suggest that meeting the criteria outlined in the five ALA Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010) provides an effective blueprint for exemplary service as a librarian. Standard 1, Teaching for Learning, encompasses the themes of Collaboration with a focus on student learning. Promotion of digital and print literacy falls in the realm of Standard 2, Literacy and Reading. Standard 3, Information and Knowledge addresses Information Literacy and Technology Integration and includes ethical information-seeking behavior, providing access to information, and assisting with digital tools and their proper usage. Standard 4, Advocacy and Leadership is evident in providing professional development, networking, and serving as leaders in their schools and with their peers who are also media specialists. Standard 5, Program Administration and Management, incorporates managing a student centered library, selection of resources, ethics, and planning of funds and facilities with sub-themes of professional dedication and coping with budget cuts. While contributing to a positive school culture could fall under the realm of Administration and Management, I chose to treat this aspect as an independent theme.

Future Research

Little research has been conducted on media specialists who have been identified as excellent practitioners in the field. The study generated questions.

- Will continued cuts to school library programs reduce teacher utilization of the school media center's services?
- Will the change to Common Core Standards produce a renewed interest in the contributions to curriculum support from school librarians?
- Does having an effective, full time, fully certified media specialist in schools with large numbers of economically disadvantaged students contribute to student success? Some studies (Quantitative Resources, 2003; Smith, 2006) have indicated that the presence of full time, certified librarians can contribute to student success, regardless of students' economic status. While this study did not specifically address that issue, all of the schools had a large ratio of economically disadvantaged students. Additional research might serve to reinforce earlier findings and discover further ways school media specialists could enhance learning for economically disadvantaged students. Another aspect of research in this area might aim to find ways to disseminate this information to school administrators and teachers.
- How can decision and policy makers become better informed about the potential benefit of effective school library media programs?

Further studies in this area would also serve to develop themes I have discovered in the course of this research. The present study could be replicated in another area of the country or with middle or elementary school media specialists with similar parameters. It would be beneficial to explore more fully the expectations of principals and teachers of the types of teaching and collaboration, information and knowledge, reading promotion, advocacy, and leadership they believe should be offered by their school library media

specialists. Another possible area for exploration is that of determining what types of pre-service learning are offered to teachers in the area of collaboration with co-workers, including their school librarian.

Limitations of the Study

The intent of the study was to provide new insight into the means and methods used by effective school librarians to perform their jobs and help develop transliterate learners. Identification of methods, procedures, and skills valued by teachers may present other school library media specialists with tools to collaborate more fully with teachers. I anticipated being able to offer administrators insight into well-managed, high quality media programs. Because this study focused on media specialists practicing at public high schools, findings may not transfer to other types of schools.

The design of the interviews used may limit possible conclusions. Self-reported data collected via interviews may not be correctly recalled and respondents and interviewees might consciously or subconsciously aggrandize or minimize their practices and achievements. The study expects that certified school media specialists in the state of Georgia have graduated from a school with an accredited school library media program. I made every effort to analyze findings conservatively. It was not the intent of this study to suggest generalizations where none were to be found, but neither should sharing the descriptive findings revealed be neglected. I recognized and presented the findings as case-specific rather than broad generalizations. The next task then is to explore the questions generated by this study in order to identify methods policy and decision makers may use to assist school library media specialists in performing up to their potential and contributing to a school where students and faculty find success.

Implications

This study is important because it illustrates the ways in which an effective library program can add value to a school, particularly in the areas of school culture and teacher support. Teachers who participated indicated they relied on the library and librarian for a variety of resources and assistance. The study also points out that classroom teachers have become aware of the impact of budget constraints on library programs and are becoming less likely to ask their media specialists for assistance in the face of shortages. Stakeholders, including policymakers and administrators, need to cultivate an awareness of what to expect from a well-run library.

An unforeseen result of this study suggests that successful school library media specialists accorded the opportunity to further their own education through participation in conferences and professional development then share with their colleagues. All of the participating media specialists not only attend conferences, each of them has shared information through presentations on local, state, or national levels. A question that arises from this finding is whether or not it benefits the school's overall learning community to enable a media specialist to participate in wide professional learning communities. While Harada and Yukawa (2009), stated professional development of teachers and librarians in elementary and secondary schools plays a crucial role in improving the quality of instruction, little research has been done concerning that question.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to provide a valid description of the means and methods employed by high school library media specialists in the state of Georgia

identified as outstanding in the field. The research was not designed as a rigorous experimental analysis but rather a descriptive look at the way this group of school librarians demonstrated their excellence in teaching for learning, promotion of literacy, information and knowledge capabilities, advocacy, and management of their programs.

The results suggest that exemplary school library media specialists are successful in fulfilling the five standards set by the ALA and AASL (2010). The following themes emerged from the data: School Culture, Collaboration, Information Literacy, and Leadership and Administration. It appears that the rubric outlined by the Georgia Department of Education (2012b) for identification of successful school media specialists is an effective instrument in that these media specialists have met or exceeded those guidelines with positive results.

Teachers placed the most importance on the location and provision of resources, technology integration, and contributing to school culture through creating a space appealing to students. Teachers were not aware of all of the responsibilities and activities of their media specialists. Librarians were responsible for a broad array of activities, some of which appear to be unrelated to their directive as a media specialist such as assisting with photography and the yearbook, spreading information, and administering a variety of technology programs for the school.

While the subjects of this research have each developed a unique style, they share common traits and practices. It is hoped that conclusions of this study will serve to guide school librarians in the goals they set and the conduct of their programs. School administrators and policy makers may draw conclusions about expectations they hold for methods employed by their school librarians.

I believe school librarians would benefit from emulating the models provided by the practitioners in this study. The following recommendations for practice would be instrumental in improving programs at any school level: (a) School librarians should aspire to execute the goals laid out in the rubrics outlined by the GaDOE (2012b) and the Initial Standards for Preparation of Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010); (b) School library media specialists should be encouraged to be active members of state and local organizations; (c) School administrators may find benefit for the entire faculty and students in assisting and encouraging school library media specialists to participate in conferences and professional development opportunities with other school librarians and technology teachers.

Perhaps these effective school librarians will help turn the tide of cuts to school library programs. There is hope. Devaney (2014) contends that school libraries are metamorphosing into hubs of communications, research, and teaching and learning enhanced and enabled by technology. According to Goff (2014), the role of librarian has changed to encompass integration of technology into the curriculum to meet standards of the Common Core. In St. Paul, Minnesota, 15 new school library positions have been created and two positions restored while Washington, D.C. schools propose to add 30 new school librarians for the 2014-2015 school year (Miller, 2014). According to a posting on LM_NET, the Listserv for school library media specialists, (Yasick, May 30, 2013), at least one district in Wyoming is adding media jobs to buildings where no certified librarians have been for many years. Many voices through the years have called for more reliance on librarians. Moreillon (2014), collected positive commentary in the form of a YouTube video from principals across the country emphasizing the importance

of school librarians and the ways they contribute to student learning. Weeks (2001) said, "In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us how to swim." Author Neil Gaiman (2010) says "Google can bring you back 100,000 answers; a librarian can bring you back the right one."

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APPENDIX A:

Invitation to Participate Letters

Appendix A:
Invitation to Participate

Dear School Library Media Specialist,

In addition to being a school library media specialist myself, I am also a doctoral candidate pursuing a degree in curriculum and instruction at Valdosta State University. As part of this program, I will be conducting a research study to learn more about how high school librarians recognized for excellence through National Board Certification, by the Georgia Library Media Association, or by the Georgia Department of Education conduct their programs. I invite you to be a part of this study.

In order to make an informed decision, I want to share more information about this study with you. The purpose of this study is to learn how exemplary school library media specialists carry out their work and contribute to the culture of their school. I would also like to hear your thoughts on information literacy. Your practices and opinions will be useful to other school library media specialists.

If you choose to participate in this study, and are so permitted by your school administration, I will ask to observe you at your school to see what your day is like. I will also ask that you meet with me for an interview that will be recorded audibly. No one but me will hear the recordings and after I have transcribed them, I will ask that you confirm the information. The recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed after I graduate. Individual schools and participants will not be specifically identified.

Participation will not hurt you in any way and may provide you with a chance to share your experiences and methods with other librarians. Your opinions and practices may be useful in helping other school library media specialists provide programming and services that contribute positively to the educational process and culture of their schools.

If you have more questions, please contact me at clyouse@valdosta.edu or by phone at 229-200-3080. If you are willing and able to participate, please contact me.

Thank you.

Cheryl L. Youse
Ed.D. Candidate, Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology
Dewar College of Education
Valdosta State University
clyouse@valdosta.edu
229-200-3080
FAX: 229-890-6144

APPENDIX B:

Interview Questions for Media Specialists

Appendix B

Interview Questions for Media Specialists

How long have you been in education?

How many years have you been a media specialist?

What degrees, certificates, and other professional trainings have you completed?

Prior to becoming a school media specialist what experiences within the field of education did you have, and how did these experiences prepare you for your current position?

What does success mean in your job as a media specialist?

Please tell me about a media specialist you admire most? Why?

Are there qualities of this individual that you have incorporated into your own role?

Can you share with me any recent books or conferences you have encountered lately that have affected your practice?

How do you solicit and process evaluation of your performance?

What types of literacy instruction are provided at your school?

What types of computer and technology instruction are provided by library staff?

What methods of delivery are used for instruction by library staff?

Tell me about your school's usage of resources within GALILEO.

Describe your understanding of information literacy.

How do you promote information literacy at your institution?

How do you assess student learning of information literacy skills?

What is your perception of how information literacy is integrated within the curriculum of your school?

How are teachers involved in the development of information literacy lessons?

What evidence do you see of the value placed on information literacy by the teachers and/or administrators in your school?

What barriers or assistance do you encounter when advocating or providing information literacy at your school?

Can you describe how decisions are made in this district?

How is the library design and implementation done in this district?

As a media specialist, how do you get an idea of what principals, teachers, and students are thinking?

Is there a story you can share with me about a time you helped students or teachers succeed?

Share a story with me about a time you faced conflict at work—either between you and another person or between two co-workers and how you dealt with it.

Please share with me challenges and pressures you face as a media specialist.

How do you believe you fulfill the five standards for Initial Preparation of School

Librarians (ALA & AASL, 2010)

Teaching for Learning

Literacy and Reading

Information and Knowledge,

Advocacy and Leadership

Program management

Are there any final comments regarding your position in this school district that you would like to share with me?

APPENDIX C:
Interview Questions for Teachers

Appendix C

Interview Questions for Teachers

How long have you been in education?

What degrees, certificates, and other professional trainings have you completed?

What does success mean in your job as a teacher?

Please tell me how you work with your media specialist.

How do you solicit and process evaluation of your performance?

What types of literacy instruction are provided at your school?

What types of computer and technology instruction are provided by library staff?

What methods of delivery are used for instruction by library staff?

Tell me about your school's usage of resources within GALILEO.

Describe your understanding of information literacy.

How do you promote information literacy at your institution?

How do you assess student learning of information literacy skills?

What is your perception of how information literacy is integrated within the curriculum of your school?

How are teachers involved in the development of information literacy lessons?

What evidence do you see of the value placed on information literacy by the teachers and/or administrators in your school?

What barriers or assistance do you encounter when advocating or providing information literacy at your school?

Can you describe how decisions are made in this district?

Is there a story you can share with me about a time your media specialist helped students

or teachers succeed?

Share a story with me about a time you faced conflict at work—either between you and another person or between two co-workers and how you dealt with it.

Are there any final comments regarding media specialists in this school district that you would like to share with me?

APPENDIX D:
Observation Protocol

Appendix D
Observation Protocol

Location:
Date:
Time of Day:

Length of Activity:	
Descriptive Notes:	Reflective Notes:

APPENDIX E:

Institutional Review Board Protocol Exemption Report



*Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for the Protection of Human Research Participants*

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-02946-2013 INVESTIGATOR: Cheryl Youse
PROJECT TITLE: Georgia's Exemplary Public High School Librarians and Information Literacy Skills Instruction

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is exempt from Institutional Review Board oversight under Exemption Category(ies) 1, 2 & 4. You may begin your study immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

Although not a requirement for exemption, the following suggestions are offered by the IRB Administrator to enhance the protection of participants and/or strengthen the research proposal:

- ☐ If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.

Barbara Gray

Barbara H. Gray, IRB Administrator

1/19/13

Date

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.

Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-259-5045.

Revised: 12.13.12

FIGURE 1

Taylorville System GALILEO Usage Statistics:

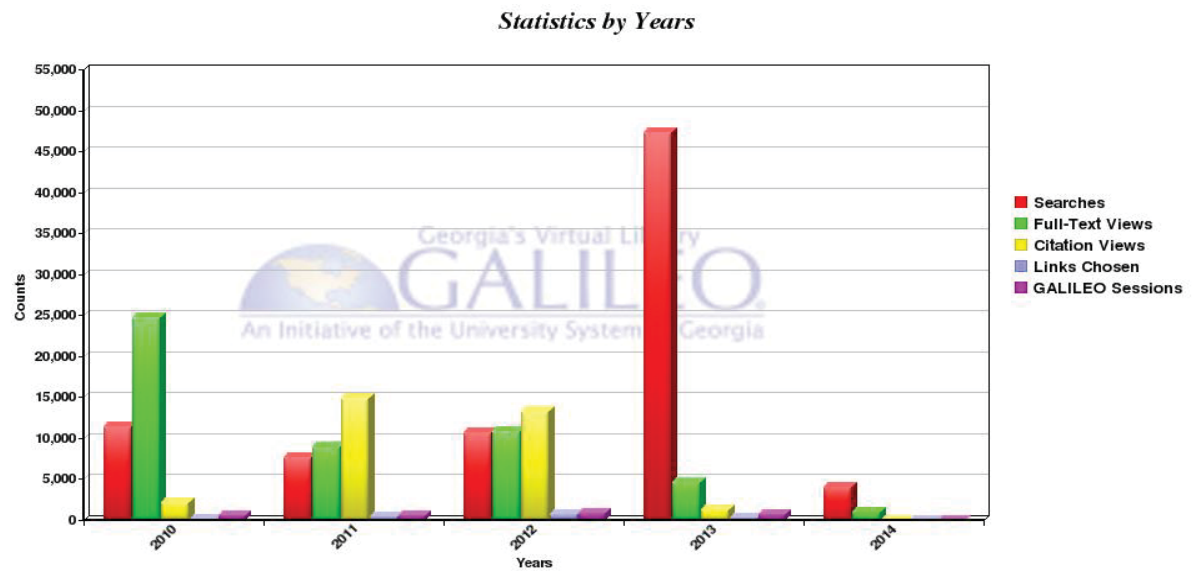


FIGURE 2

Bernton System GALILEO Usage Statistics:

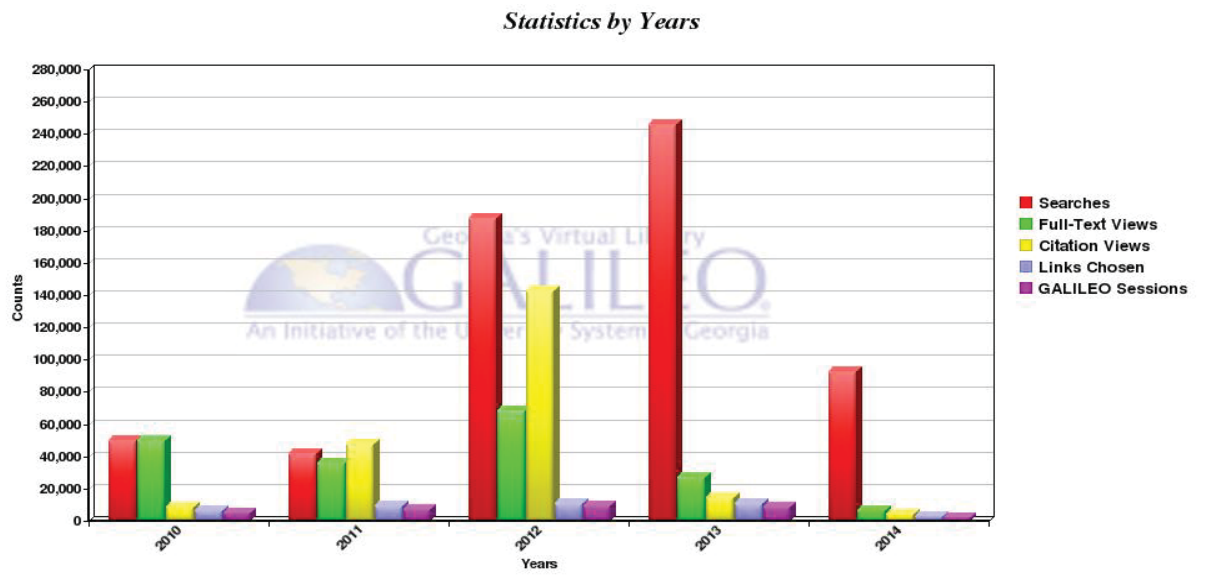
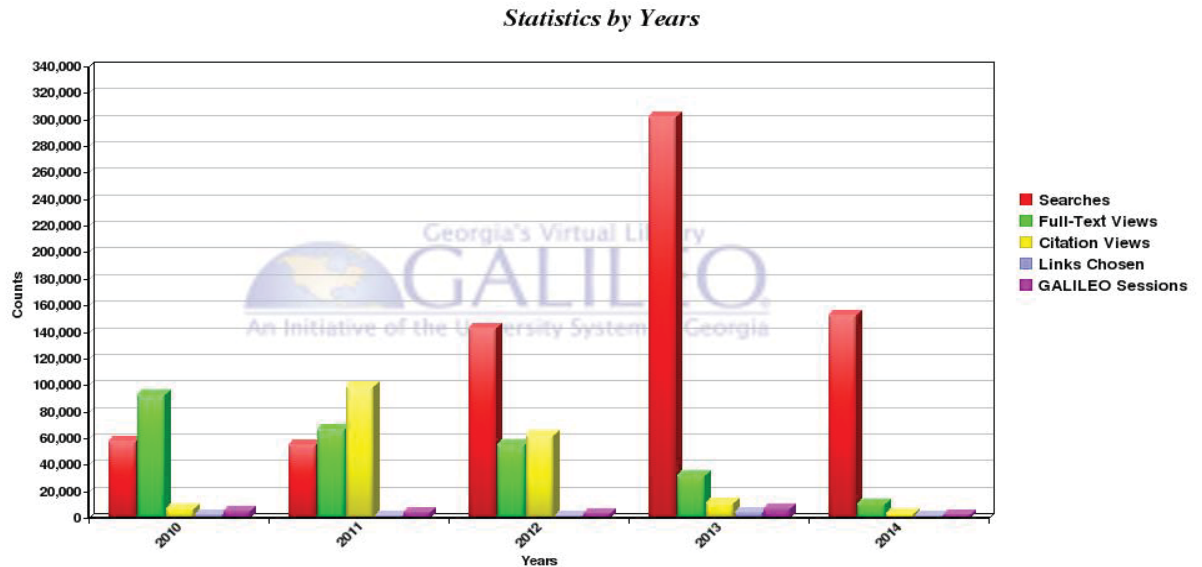


FIGURE 3

Easton System GALILEO Usage Statistics:



As illustrated, GALILEO usage is highest at Easton Schools, followed by Bernton and then Taylorville (Figures 1, 2, 3). Statistics for 2014 were only available through May at this writing so it appears that Easton’s use will be similar for the 2014-2015 school year. Dependence upon this state database is clearly on the rise for all three of the school districts. At Taylorville, Dr. Lynch’s students rely heavily on databases he pays for out of the library budget. He coaches teachers in the use of “a wide variety of online databases that we use including GALILEO. We have the Gale Students in Context that we use and Grolier online.”